THE DYNAMICS OF ETHNIC IDENTIFICATION AND ETHNIC GROUP RELATIONS AMONG THE PEOPLE OF "DOR", NORTHERN DARFUR, SUDAN.

Musa Adam Abdul-Jalil

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University of Edinburgh

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is composed by me. I have also undertaken the research on which the thesis is based.

ABSTRACT

The thesis addresses itself to the problem of ethnic identification in a multi-ethnic area of the Sudan. Having applied the current anthropological theories of ethnicity to the ethnography of the area and found them deficient the thesis goes on to suggest refinements which would improve the applicability of these theories to such complex situations.

The area of study is that of "Dor" in the western Sudan. It forms a transitional zone between the predominantly pastoralist north inhabited by the Zaghawa and the agriculturalist south inhabited by the Fur. As such the transitional zone has a long history of ethnic diversity.

The ethnography of both the Fur and the Zaghawa are examined, with special emphasis on the history of settlement and contact. In addition, the social relations of production are explored.

This part of the thesis is followed by an examination of the social organization of the "Dor" area. In this examination special attention is paid to how the social organization compares and contrasts with that of the Fur and Zaghawa. Evidence of the variable nature of ethnic allegiance in the area is presented and the criteria of ethnic definition are explored.

Finally the dynamics of ethnic identification in "Dor" are examined in the light of the theories of ethnicity which have been applied to them. In particular

the approach of Frederik Barth, exemplified in the work of Gunnar Haaland in this area, is evaluated. This reveals the approach to be excessively simplistic when applied to the complexities of the multi-ethnic situation found in "Dor". A more refined approach, the contextual-situational approach, is developed and shown to offer a more satisfactory analysis of the dynamics of ethnic identification in "Dor".

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NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

In writing Arabic words I have followed the system adopted by the editors of Sudan Notes and Records.

For geographical names I have followed the conventional spelling used by the Sudan Government Survey Department.

Indigenous names and words; and colloquial forms of Arabic words have been written according to the way the people pronounce them.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Ethnic groups have existed all through the history of human societies. The word "ethnicity", which refers to the way people identify with these groups, has only recently been adopted by social scientists (for the history of the term "ethnic" see Glazer and Moynihan, editors, 1976 -- Introduction). The recent boom in the literature of ethnic studies probably owes its roots to the theoretical debate on "plural societies." The concept of a plural society was first introduced by J. S. Furnival in the forties and subsequently developed by M. G. Smith in the sixties. Smith refined the conceptualization of pluralism and defines it in the following way:

> Pluralism is a condition in which members of a common society are internally distinguished by fundamental differences in their institutional practice. Where present, such differences are not distributed at random; they normally cluster, and by their clusters they simultaneously identify institutionally distinct aggregates or groups, and establish deep social divisions between them. The prevalence of such systematic disassociation between the members of institutionally distinct collectivities within a single society constitutes pluralism. (Smith, 1969:27)

Pluralism, therefore, proceeds from the recognition of conflict. For this reason, the majority of "pluralist" literature is based on the study of post-colonial

societies in what is today called "The Third World". Consequently, the problem of "nation-building" became the focus of their concern as is reflected in the following statement by Kuper:

> The plural society, in the context of this colloquium, includes the colonial societies that subjected most of the people of the world to the domination of rulers of different race and culture. It includes the many new states that achieved independence after World War II and now seek to transform from state to nation the medley of peoples inherited in arbitrary combinations from the colonial powers. (Kuper, 1969:7)

The exponents of theories of pluralism by no means restrict their concern to colonial and post-colonial societies as such. They are anxious to establish a universal theory of interethnic relations as well.

The literature on ethnicity or ethnic studies is growing rapidly. It is not a viable proposition to offer a comprehensive review of such literature, for three main reasons. Firstly, the body of the literature itself is very large and one cannot do it any justice in a short introductory chapter. Secondly, the field of ethnic studies is not yet clearly defined, so the existing literature is not homogeneous in terms of subject matter and the formulation of sociological problems related to it. Lastly, there is an absence of comprehensive theories of ethnicity. As a result the existing "middle-range" theories reflect to a great extent the "ethnographic area" concerns of particular theorists.

For the above stated reasons, I will limit my review to the literature which has direct bearing on the sociological problems addressed by this thesis. My interest, here, is in the identification of ethnic entities and the relations between them.

The first critical assesment of the problem was made by Frederick Barth in the editorial introduction to "Ethnic Groups and Boundaries" (Barth, 1969). He remarked that for a long time anthropologists held a naive assumption that the persistence of ethnic groups and their boundaries depend on a relative geographical and/or social isolation. He underlines two observations that invalidate the former view. Firstly, ethnic boundaries persist despite the flow of personnel across them. Secondly, stable, persisting and often vitally important social relations are maintained across such boundaries and are frequently based upon dichotomized ethnic statuses.

Barth then tackles the problem of definition and recalls the general understanding prevalent in anthropological literature of the term ethnic group as designating a population which

1) is largely self perpetuating.
2) share fundamental cultural values; realized in overt unity in cultural forms.
3) makes up a field of communication and interaction.
4) has a membership which identifies itself and is identified by others, as constituting a category

distinguishable from other categories of the same order.

In Barth's opinion, such a definition begs all the critical questions and that it allows us to assume that boundary maintenance is unproblematic. However, he considers the fourth characteristic as the critical feature of ethnic groups and constructs a general approach centred around the conception that ethnic groups are categories of ascription and identification used by actors to categorize themselves and others. The aim of such an approach, Barth claims, is to shift the focus of investigation from internal institutions and history of separate groups to ethnic boundaries and boundary maintenance. Also, it allows us to discover different processes involved in generating and maintaining ethnic groups (Barth, 1969).

Although some critics (chiefly Cohen, 1974) attacked him for considering ethnicity as a cultural phenomenon, his basic concern remains the social organization of ethnic groups. Indeed, he sees ethnic groups as organizational type. Cultural features represent the content of ethnic identity, but their importance is only symbolic. In Barth's words:

> Neither of these kinds of cultural "contents" follow from a descriptive list of cultural features or cultural differences; one cannot predict from first principles which features will be emphasized and made organizationally relevant by the actors. In other words ethnic categories provide an organizational vessel that may be given varying amounts and

> forms of content in different socio-cultural systems. (Barth, 1969:14)

In the editorial introduction to "Urban Ethnicity" (Cohen, 1974) Abner Cohen states his view of ethnic groups as interest groups. His definition is:

> ...a collectivity of people who (a) share patterns of normative behaviour (b) form a part of a larger population, interacting with people from other collectivities within a framework of a social system. The term ethnicity refers to the degree of conformity by members of the collectivity to these shared norms in the course of social interaction. (Cohen, 1974:x)

The writer's main thesis is to promote "political interpretation of what are essentially non-political formations and activities" (Cohen, ~~1969~~ 1974). His position derives from an earlier study of what he termed as "retribalization" of Hausa in Yoruba towns in Nigeria (Cohen, 1969). There he describes an ethnic group as

> ...an informal interest group whose members are distinct from the members of other groups within the same society in that they share a measure of what Smith calls "compulsory institutions" like kinship and religion, and can communicate among themselves relatively easily. The term ethnicity refers to the strife between such ethnic groups, in the course of which people stress their identity and exclusiveness. (Cohen, 1969:4)

Although Cohen has modified his definitions of "ethnic group" and "ethnicity", his main conception of ethnic groups as politically motivated interest groups remains the same. One notices the discrepancy between the notion of "interest group" and the definition of ethnicity as

"degree of conformity by members of the collectivity to these norms". It is evident that political interest does not necessarily rise from "shared patterns of normative behaviour".

In the African context, the earliest studies of ethnicity (then referred to as "tribalism") were done by the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute anthropologists (sometimes known as the "Manchester School"). Gluckman (1958), Mitchell (1956, 1970, 1974) and Epstein (1958) have extensively studied the now Zambian copperbelt towns. They were mainly concerned with the behaviour of African workers in the town and how they interacted and reacted in a society that included members of various tribes plus Europeans. Generally speaking, they were mainly concerned with the cultural aspects of group membership.

There is one major methodological contribution made by this group of scholars that should be specially mentioned here and that is the introduction of "situational analysis" (mainly Gluckman 1958 and Mitchell 1956). The method emphasized the importance of the "context" in which categorical references to "tribes" are made. Epstein made a further step by discovering the principle of "situational selection" (Epstein 1958). According to the principle, Africans in the town "select" the appropriate normative behaviour according to the "situations" in which they interact. Thus, they behave as tribesmen in the family circle and at the beer halls. On the other

hand, they behave as African labourers in the work situation. In brief, ethnic groups have been viewed as categories of interaction to be examined within the framework of situational analysis (Epstein 1958).

In a recent publication, Epstein sets himself to examining the cognitive and affective dimension of ethnicity (Epstein 1978). As he hinted, his position is predisposed by his own ethnic experience as a Jew of the Diaspora (Epstein 1978:xi). He therefore devoted a great part of the book to discussing the psycho-cultural aspects of ethnicity. The author emphasizes a point which is sociologically significant and that is the element of choice in ethnic identification. In his own words:

> I have stressed that in a poly-ethnic situation ethnic identity offers only one among a number of possible forms of social identification. For the individual, therefore, whether, and to what extent, he acquires a sense of ethnic identity always involves some element of choice. (Epstein 1978:xv)

As it has been noticed by other writers (chiefly Patterson 1975) the element of choice is important for a dynamic view of ethnic identification. The author also recognizes the division between "primordialist" and "circumstancialist" approaches and seeks to avoid the dilemma by regarding the two as variables to be treated in their complex interaction. While Barth considers the "persistence of boundaries" as the crucial issue in

ethnic phenomena (Barth 1969), Epstein holds that the perpetuation of ethnic identity is the crucial issue. He sees two aspects to it (Epstein 1978:109-112):

(a) the categorical; which is characterized by the duality of external and internal factors (the author notes that whenever these categories are generated they quickly become interwoven with questions of hierarchy, stratification, and the pursuit of political interests).

(b) the cognitive; which operates through what he calls the "intimate culture". On this basis, the author draws attention to childhood experience and he devotes a whole chapter for it. Although the author denies his commitment to a simply psychological model of ethnicity, his integrationist intention to produce a "primordialist -circumstancialist" model instead appears to be less evident in the book.

In 1975, two important books on the subject of ethnicity were published. Their importance comes from the fact that they represent the most significant collections of articles on the subject after Barth's (1969). Unlike Barth's book the diversity of opinions expressed by the contributors is the main characteristic of these two works. As I indicated at the beginning of the chapter, only a partial review of the contents of these books will be given.

The first book (Ethnicity: Theory and Experience) is edited by Glazer and Moynihan (the authors of "Beyond the Melting Pot"). The contributors to the book are

sociologists and political scientists (with the exception of one historian, Richard Pipes). The major objective of the book is to consider ethnicity in a wider context of power relations. There is no common agreement as to the definition or the theoretical framework for treating the phenomenon but nevertheless, the general tendency is summarized by the editors,who take an intermediate position between the two main trends that characterize theories of ethnicity. The two trends are:

1) The "primordialist" view that considers ethnicity in terms of basic ties and connections that create groups as against any rational interest.

2) The "circumstancialist" view that we have to look to specific circumstances to explain why groups maintain their identity. (Glazer and Moynihan, 1976)

In the same book, Talcott Parsons put the idea in a more precise form by proposing that ethnic groups should be viewed as characterized by tradition and contract (Parsons 1976).

However, there is one article in the book which is radically different in its perspective from the rest. The writer, Orlando Patterson, adopts a Marxist analysis and treats ethnicity as a variable in a stratification model. His approach is anti-cultural:

> The objectives of this chapter are to argue that ethnicity can only be understood in terms of a dynamic and contextual view of group allegiances; that what is critical about an ethnic group is not the particular set of symbolic objects that characterize

> it, but the social uses of these objects; and that ethnic loyalties reflect, and are maintained by, the underlying socio-economic interests of group members. (Patterson 1976:305)

Having shown his objectives, the writer makes three assumptions for his theoretical construct, which are:

1) human beings have a variety of group allegiances.
2) these allegiances may coincide or overlap or conflict with each other.
3) human beings seek to maximize their economic and social status and minimize their survival risks in the societies in which they live.

Patterson then attacks theories of cultural elements of ethnicity as descriptive and static and he proposes a dynamic and analytical theory based on the definition of ethnicity as

> ...the condition wherein certain members of society, in a given social context, choose to emphasize as their meaningful basis of primary, extrafamilial identity certain assumed cultural, national, or somatic traits. (Patterson, 1976:308)

The writer further asserts that "a conscious sense of belonging is critical". He sees this as the only condition of ethnicity. He then bases his hypothesis of contextual choice of allegiance on three principles. These are;

1) The principle of reconciliation (or least conflict of interest);
2) the principle of optimization of interests;
3) the principle of the primacy of class interests.

The feasibility of his theory is then tested with a comparative case study of two Chinese communities in the Caribbean: the Chinese of Jamaica and Guyana.

Although I agree with the formulation of the first two principles, I find it difficult to appreciate the conclusion reached by the writer, which is that in the long-run ethnic allegiances will give way to class allegiances. As this has not been demonstrated in contemporary societies, the author's view remains a speculation which reflects his own ideological stance. In general, Patterson's article has better prospects for a dynamic structural analysis than the rest of the articles in the book.

The second book (Ethnicity and Resource Competition in Plural Societies), published in 1975, is edited by Leo Despres. The book is a collection of articles with materials from different parts of the world and are mostly "anthropological" in nature. In the closing article (Toward a Theory of Ethnic Phenomenon), Despres surveys the anthropological literature on ethnicity and chooses Barth's "Ethnic Groups and Boundaries" as a "landmark" from which he dates publications on ethnicity as B.B. and A.B. (i.e. Before and After Barth, editor, 1969). Barth's interest in the subject was developed in the studies he conducted in Southwest Asia. His treatment of ethnic groups as corresponding with "niches" or "eco-systems" inspired many anthropological writings (including the book edited by Despres). Apart from Barth,

the most important contributor to ethnic studies in the B.B. period is M. G. Smith (Smith 1956a, 1965, 1969). His concern was the organization of plural societies, hence his emphasis on ethnic combinations as strategic in the study of social and cultural pluralism. In Glazer and Moynihan's terms, Smith can rightly be considered a "premordialist" theorist.

Taking into consideration the varying degrees of disagreement between the writers, Despres reveals a general tendency in all the papers. These tendencies are:

1) They all take issues with the subjectivist conception of ethnicity which is thought to derive from the work of Barth. They also seem to agree that an exclusively objectivist conception is unserviceable. The inevitable conclusion accepted by the majority of the contributors is that ethnicity is both an objective and subjective phenomenon.

2) That ethnic categories are relativistic. Therefore, ethnic identities may vary according to the variety of social situations in which they may be appropriately expressed.

3) Not all social categories are ethnic. It follows that individuals need not play ethnic roles all the time in order that poly-ethnic systems persist.

Certain conclusions are also extracted by the editor and are supposed to reflect the consensus of the writers. These are mainly:

1) that ethnic phenomena might best be understood from the point of view of stratification theory or more general theories of power.

2) that ethnic populations disclose historical experiences relevant to the circumstances affecting their identity, organization, and system of relationship.

3) that significant relations are more than apparent between factors affecting the competition for resources and the persistence, corporate organization, and differential incorporation of ethnic populations.

Despite these sound conclusions, the lack of a comprehensive theory of ethnicity characterizes the book. Perhaps the best evaluation to the volume is made in this statement by Despres:

> To summarize, the papers which comprize this volume suggest that prevailing conceptions of ethnicity are perhaps too ambiguous in their overall construction to significantly advance the comparative study of ethnic phenomena beyond the work of Barth. (Despres 1975:194)

Another recent contribution to the discussion of ethnicity comes from World Anthropology series. The book "Perspectives on Ethnicity" (edited by Holloman, R.E., and Arutiunov, S.A.) is the end product of the IX International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences. The articles cover a wide range of topics and are organized in four sections:

Theoretical Issues in the Study of Ethnicity

Ethnicity as Identity: Individuals, Families, and Isolated Groups

Contact, Acculturation, and Boundary Maintenance

Ethnicity and the Future

One significant aspect of this collection of articles is the diversity of ethnographic situations as well as the ethnic backgrounds of the contributors themselves. However, about half of the contributions come from Eastern Europe. For this reason the most interesting and important aspect of the book in my opinion is the juxtaposition of the Soviet "ethnos" theory and the less unified Western theories of "ethnicity". As I cannot review these articles closely, I will give a general picture of the ethnos theory plus another article which is directly relevant for my present work.

As Holloman states, Soviet ethnos theory fits within a Marxist framework. Ethnic processes are therefore viewed within an evolutionary-historical framework in which the determinants are political-economic. As such, ethnic processes are related to general societal evolution in a dialectical manner. For this reason, fieldwork is oriented towards the identification of ethnic units and the determination of their states of development.

Arutiunov and Bromley point out in their article (1978) two things that characterize Soviet contributions to ethnic studies. Firstly, they recognize the hierarchical nature of ethnicity (in terms of their subdivisions and secondary subdivisions). They tend to treat all ethnic entities equally. One may point out that

this is likely to create confusion since groups of different orders are put on the same analytical plane.

The second characteristic of Soviet ethnic studies is the historical approach. This is different from the use of historical data in sociological analysis which has been popular in the West for a long time. More precisely, the historical approach arises from the Marxist dogma of evolutionary stages in the development of human societies.

But in spite of the profound differences between the ethnos theory and other Western theories of ethnicity Soviet ethnographers define ethnic groups (ethnos) in a way that is similar to the definitions given by their Western colleagues. Referring to the term ethnos, Arutiunov and Bromley state:

> In Soviet science we understand the following by this term: stable human communities, tied together by unity of territory and history of their formation, and by a common language and culture -- all of which are manifested in a certain self-consciousness or self-identification based on ethnicity.(1)
> (Arutiunov and Bromley, 1978:11)

The article by Arens (1978) is very relevant since in it the writer discusses the processual nature of ethnicity by accounting for the mergence of "new" ethnic identities in East Africa. He illustrates the flexible character of ethnic identity by contrasting the situation

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1. For a comparison between this definition of ethnic group and Western definitions, see Barth (1969).

during the colonial and independence periods in Tanzania. He argues that colonial rule encouraged and sanctioned the development of tribal identities and that it especially approved of those who behaved like "natives".

In contrast to this policy, the government of independent Tanzania practiced a policy of ideological and organizational de-emphasis on tribal identity. This led to the increase of the prestige of those polyethnic communities which underplay tribal differences and pursue a Swahili lifestyle. The writer claims that in this new period the Swahili has emerged as a more positive ethnic category.

But despite the prestige that is now accorded to Swahili identity traditional tribal identity still plays some role in social relations in modern Tanzania. Arens mentions interpersonal relations as an example of situations where tribal identities are still relevant. In Mto wa Mbu (the community where he did fieldwork), the writer could "still observe the manner in which a certain segment of the population emphasized their common tribal background in instances of economic competition." (Arens 1978:218). Such evidence seems to point to the fact that flexibility of ethnic identification does not depend only on external factors but on internal factors as well. The writer, however, concentrates on the effect of external factors to support Fried's argument (Fried 1967) that tribes in Africa are a response to the era of European political dominance. Such an argument overlooks the

internal factors involved in ethnic processes while it overemphasizes the role of external factors.

Finally, I agree with the general conclusion by Arens regarding the flexible character of ethnicity:

> ...ethnicity, therefore, is not necessarily a fixed form. The ethnic label selected and employed will depend upon situational factors involving a consideration of the expected relative gains to come from the choice. (Arens 1978:219)

This conclusion also supports Patterson's argument (1975) that ethnicity is a dynamic phenomenon and that people can choose their ethnic identification (by ~~chaning~~ changing the social context). These ideas will be discussed in more detail in the last chapter where I shall attempt to explain the dynamic nature of ethnic identification in the area of my fieldwork.

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In this thesis I am concerned with ethnic identification as a manifest of ethnic group relations. The discussion is developed through the presentation of a case study: the community of "Dor" in northern Darfur, Sudan. Although I have chosen this community to be the centre of my study, I have also extended my investigation to the adjacent communities and the region in general (Darfur). I have also sought historical data relating to the political history of the region since the seventeenth century.

Behind this approach lies a methodological argument that deserves some attention. It is largely accepted today to say that sociological studies of small-scale societies have been so far dominated by accounts of "tribal societies" which are treated in isolation from the wider context of their social and physical existence. In my opinion, this is largely due to the false conceptualization of the so-called "tribal society" as a biologically self-perpetuating independent political entity which enjoys some degree of territorial isolation[1] (see Barth, 1969 for more discussion of this point). Leach has been among the first scholars to revolt against this dominant trend in ethnographic studies. His criticism is clearly reflected in his "Political Systems of Highland Burma", as this quotation from the book shows:

> This classical manner in ethnography may be summarised thus: It is assumed that within a somewhat arbitrary geographical area a social system exists; the population involved in this social system is of one culture; the social system is uniform. Hence the anthropologist can choose for himself a locality "of any convenient size" and examine in detail what goes on in this locality; from this examination he will hope to reach conclusions about the principles of organisation operating in this particular locality. He then generalises from these conclusions and writes a book about the organisation of the society considered as a whole. (Leach, 1970:60)

The reason for this attack on the classical manner of ethnographic study is that the writer has found that

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1. Nadel's "Black Byzantium" (1942) is one of the earliest exceptions to the traditional functionalist ethnographies.

within the Kachin Hills Area there are places where named groups are segregated into fairly well-defined areas while in other places they are all jumbled up. This leads him to widen the field of his investigation and also to make use of historical data that was available on the area. In justification to his approach he writes in the conclusion to his book:

> It seems to me axiomatic that where neighbouring communities have demonstrable economic, political and military relations with each other then the field of any useful sociological analysis must override cultural boundaries. (Leach 1970:292)

It is the awareness about the point raised by Leach in the above quotation that made me plan my field investigation to include the wider environment (social and physical) of which the community of my study is a part.

Otherwise, the theoretical orientation of the thesis owes much to the Barthian school of thought both in terms of the general theory of social organization (known as transactional analysis) and its specific approach to ethnic group relations. Perhaps I should add at this early stage that my aim is to improve the Barthian approach rather than totally rejecting it, i.e. I find it potentially useful.

The importance of Barth's contribution to ethnic group studies has already been acknowledged in this chapter. I shall be dealing in more detail with other contributions using his mode of analysis. However I think it is useful to mention, in brief, from the outset

what I think the shortcomings of the Barthian approach are.

First of all, one notices that the exponents of Barthian approach give very little attention to the use of historical data. This is probably a result of the concentration on individual choices which is the main assumption of transactional analysis. Writing about models of social organization Barth states:

> The most simple and general model available to us is one of an aggregate of people exercising choice while influenced by certain constraints and incentives. (Barth 1966:1)

Thus individuals are postulated as free actors who constantly try to maximize value by trying to "assure that the value gained for them is greater or equal to the value lost." (op. cit.:4) This is referred to as value management.

The problem, on the conceptual level, seems to me to arise from the assumption about individuals' freedom (which is overemphasized). On the practical level, the tendency has always been to regard constraints and incentives in a materialist sense. This is probably the reason why there is no easy relationship between the present and the past. Hence, historical data is difficult to integrate.

Another shortcoming of the Barthian approach is in the field of identification of ethnic groups. Because of Barth's intention to concentrate on ethnic boundaries as

the most critical issue in ethnic group relations, he has constantly tended to define ethnic groups in terms of ecological niching. Gunnar Haaland, whose material on Darfur will be discussed later in the thesis has done the same thing. In my opinion, it is simplistic to define ethnic groups in terms of the economic careers of its membership. It may be the case that in certain ethnographic situations ethnic entities are usefully defined in terms of one criteria only, i.e. economic/ecological. But it is doubtful whether this is a general phenomenon. Furthermore, ethnic boundaries often overlap at the peripheries.

This leads us to the third point of criticism about the Barthian approach and that is the assumption that the individual identifies with only one group. If he changes his group, that change must be permanent. In other words, ethnic identification is seen as having a fixed form. It is one of my major tasks in this thesis to argue that ethnic identifications are situationally conditioned. In this I seem to agree with Patterson (1976) and Arens (1978). A full discussion of these points will be made in the final chapter where I shall also try to suggest alternative solutions to the shortcomings of the Barthian approach. My first point of criticism (regarding the use of historical data) is being implemented in the structure of the thesis itself as we shall shortly see.

Before that, it is perhaps useful if a brief statement about the ethnographic situation, which is the centre

of my thesis, is made. The thesis deals with the salient features of a small community that represents a transitional zone between two polarized societies in Northern Darfur Province in Sudan. "Dor"[1] is a small area of approximately 175 square miles and is inhabited by a population of mixed ethnic origins (ethnically heterogeneous).

To the north of "Dor" live the pastoralist Zaghawa and to the south the agriculturalist Fur. In fact both groups have a mixed economy but the emphasis is made on one sector (animal husbandry or cultivation). The people of "Dor" pursue both activities but it is difficult to classify them wholly in terms of one of them.

The Zaghawa and the Fur refer to the people of "Dor" as Korabery (Zaghawa word for Fur/Zaghawa). This is largely a response to the fact that multilingualism is common in "Dor". Many people (including children under 10) can communicate in Fur and/or Zaghawa besides the lingua franca, Arabic. This is a characteristic feature of "Dor". Moreover, the name Korabery also refers to the fact of ethnic heterogeneity that also characterizes this community. Although many ethnic groups are represented here Zaghawa and Fur are the major ethnic categories.[2] They represent dichotomized cultural types in which language plays an important role.

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1. I shall refer to the village with the same name as Dor without the double inverted commas.
2. Statistically speaking the Fur are a minority group in "Dor", but other groups like Tunjur, Berti and Seinga are considered culturally akin to the Fur (as against Zaghawa).

"Dor" is therefore a transitional zone in more than one sense, but it is by no means a unique example. Indeed, such communities are common in several parts of the Sudanic belt in sub-Saharan Africa. This area has witnessed the rise and fall of many centralized states long before the fifteenth century. Population movements and trade closely followed political and environmental changes. As a result, local communities became parts of the regional political economy. Communities occupying transitional zones can therefore be understood better, sociologically, if they are treated in the wider regional context.

"Dor" is a test-case where the usefulness of the Barthian approach can be examined. Since Barth is mainly concerned with the investigation of ethnic boundaries, one would expect his model to explain the "Dor" situation. As we shall see later, the Barthian model as applied by Haaland does not offer a satisfactory explanation to the problem of ethnic identification in Darfur. In fact it can be argued that the Barthian model works well with situations where ecological adaptations coincide with ethnic cleavage.

It is one of the purposes of the present thesis to present alternative solutions to the shortcomings of the Barthian approach. This exercise will come at the end of the dissertation, after the presentation of the material. Below, then, is the scheme of the chapters.

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This introductory chapter is followed by another on the general background to the region of Darfur. This includes a brief review of the ecological zones of the region, the political history of the Darfur Sultanate and the trade activities of the time and subsequent developments in the political field. At the end of the same chapter short notes on the main "tribes" of northern Darfur are given. The aim of this chapter is to set the wider regional context within which the social organization of the community of "Dor" has grown and still operates.

Chapter III and IV are devoted to the introduction of Fur and Zaghawa ethnic groups respectively. After brief accounts of traditional histories of both groups, I depict the main elements of social organization in each case (the formation of descent groups and local communities, the operation of concepts relating to residence and territory and above all the forms of economic activity). I then end each chapter with a discussion on the nature of ethnicity of the group in question.

Chapter V is an introduction to the transitional zone "Dor" which is the main focus of the thesis. After describing the environmental set-up of Dar Sueini (the administrative unit that embraces "Dor"), I delimit the transitional zone which I refer to as the "Dor" belt. This is followed by accounts of the clans that inhabit Dar Sueini and a special consideration is given to the Kaitinga and Seinga. The chapter ends with a discussion

of the administrative development of Dar Sueini and the ethnic politics that accompanied the process.

In Chapter VI a more detailed picture of economic activities pursued by the people of "Dor" is given. This includes a description of the environment, land-ownership, the organization of labour, cultivation and animal husbandry.

Three related topics are then presented and discussed in Chapter VII; these are: descent, co-residence and intermarriage. The aim of the chapter is to contrast the picture of ethnic heterogeneity and the resultant diversity of interests viewed in Chapter V with a picture that emphasizes trends of integration. Statistical material is presented which reflect considerably high degrees of co-residence and intermarriage. By and large the analysis shows that local community membership is the basis for day-to-day social interaction between co-villagers.

Chapter VIII contains the main analysis. I start with a brief discussion of the debate relating to the problem of "tribe" showing why I prefer to use the term "ethnic group". This is followed by a criticism of the Barthian approach with special references to Haaland's work (1969 and 1972). After that I propose an amendment to the Barthian approach which I term a "contextual-situational" approach. The key to explaining the dynamics of ethnic identification in "Dor", I contend, is the criteria of identification which are selectively used according to

varying situations. These criteria are: territory, occupation, language and genealogy. The list is not intended to be exhaustive nor are the above mentioned criteria picked up at random. They only represent the main criteria of identification that I could observe in the field situation. For this reason I devote the last section of the last chapter to showing how the "Dor" "system" actually works. This is done through a discussion of the folk model and by giving examples of concrete situations.

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Perhaps it is now suitable to make a few statements about the period, conditions and methods under which fieldwork was done.

Fieldwork extended for, roughly, one year (between September 1976 and November 1977). This was broken by brief visits to Khartoum in November 1976 and May 1977. My original plan was to conduct intensive investigation of the social organization and ethnic composition of communities in the "Dor" belt and later to make extensive surveys in the adjacent Fur and Zaghawa areas. Local conditions, mainly drought, prevented me from executing the plan in that order. The majority of the people in "Dor" and Zaghawa dars[1] had to go to the south during the dry season in search of grain for themselves and pasture and water for their animals. I therefore decided to make my extensive surveys first. After a few weeks' stay in Dor I visited several places in the Fur area, including

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1. Dar is the Arabic word for country.

Jebel Si, Kebkabiya and Turra (in Jebel Marra). I also visited the Zaghawa centres of Anka, Um Marahīk, Um Buru and Karnoi. Then I paid similar visits to several dry -season cattle camps occupied by people from "Dor" in Funu and Fatta-Barno.

As for my stay in "Dor", the original plan was to choose three centres (village/communities) between which to spend my time. As it turned out this was not practicable, so I decided instead to make the village of Dor my main centre. From there I used to make trips to other villages.

I used two methods for collecting information from the field. Participant observation was the main method used. As I myself am a citizen of Darfur, I had no difficulty in establishing rapport with my informants. I used to deal with them freely and in various ways. Sometimes I used to conduct interviews asking questions and writing down answers (or recording the conversation on a tape-recorder). But by and large I used to make informal interviews or listen to conversations between the people which I then noted down when I was alone. The statistical material was collected by means of a household census card (see Appendix) which I designed especially for this purpose. The interviews were made in July 1977 (the beginning of the rainy season). Two school boys helped me with the completion of the forms (126 in all) which was conducted in 33 villages.

In addition to the above mentioned two methods of data collection, I collected archival material in the headquarters of North-Western Area Council in Kutum where there is invaluable information on "intertribal relations".

CHAPTER II

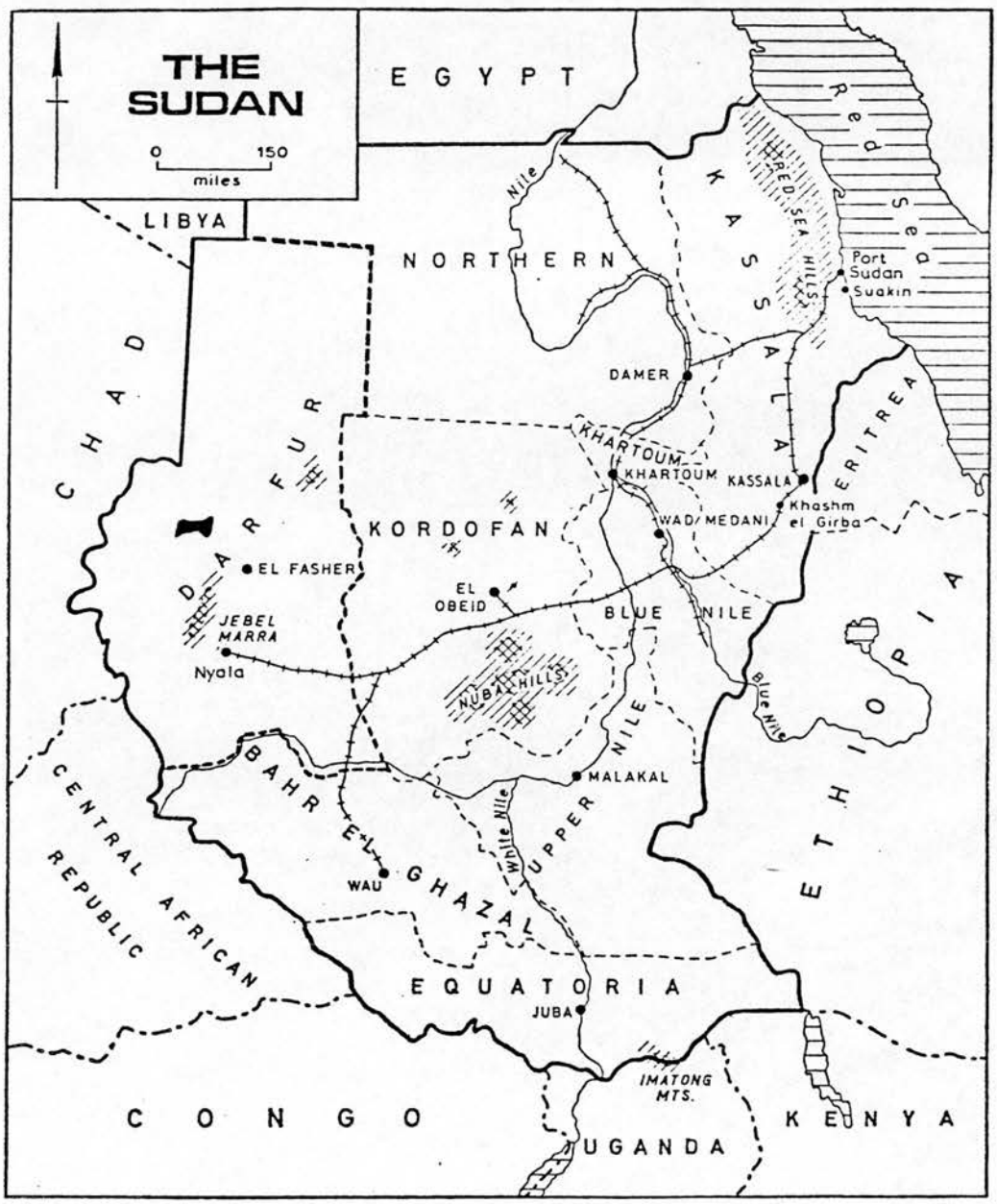
A GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO DARFUR

The westernmost region in the Democratic Republic of Sudan is called Darfur. It has recently been divided into two provinces, Northern and Southern. For historical considerations which will be clear later, I am going to consider both provinces as one unit which I shall refer to as Darfur. The region lies between longitudes 22° and 27°30' east and between 9°th and 20°th latitudes north.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a wider environmental and historical background against which I shall later present a more detailed ethnographic account of the area of my fieldwork. I have already made it clear in the introduction that I consider it important to treat ethnic groups in the wider context of their existence. This includes environmental as well as social organizational features of the region.

I shall first begin with an account of the general features of the physical environment. After that I shall review the history of Darfur in relation to four topics: pre-Islamic Darfur, the introduction of Islam, the Keira Sultanate and subsequent political developments. This is followed by a brief analysis of the history of trade in Darfur and the chapter ends with short notes on the main ethnic groups inhabiting northern Darfur today. This is

Map 1. The Sudan, Darfur and the "Dor" Belt



The "Dor" Belt

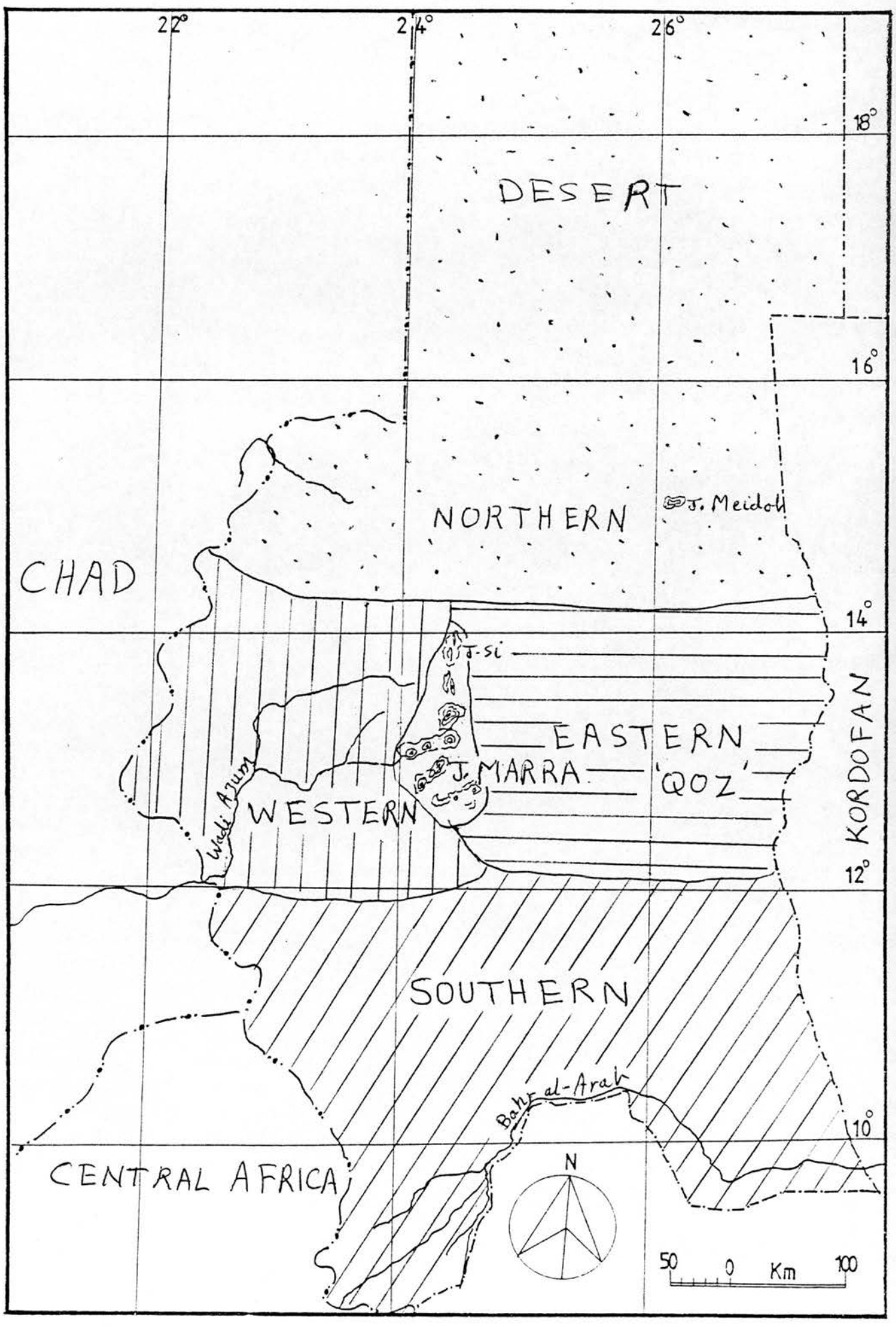
intended to make reference to these groups easier in later chapters.

For convenience, Darfur can be divided into five ecological zones which also correspond with the pattern of economic activities in the region. These are:

The Northern Zone

A semi-desert land stretching from Kutum town up to the Libyan desert (Great Sahara), covering the area between latitudes 14°30' and 20° north. The northernmost part is complete desert. Broken hill-ranges scatter in the middle and southern parts of this zone, with wadis (streams) surrounded by shrubs and trees running in between. In the north-eastern corner of this zone there is Jebel Meidob, a volcanic mountain, which rises to a height of 6,000 feet from the surrounding plains. In the inhabited areas annual rainfall ranges between 150 mm and 300 mm from north to south (Tubiana, 1977:4). The vegetation consists of short grass (steppe) in the south and desert vegetation in the north. Animal husbandry is the predominant occupation in the area but the cultivation of dukhn (bullrush millet) is also common, especially in the southern parts of the zone. The nomadic Arab camel-owners share the pastures of this zone in the hot and cold dry seasons with the transhumant Zaghawa, Meidob, and Zaiyadiya who also raise cattle, sheep and goats. The desert part of this area, which is known as the Jizu, grows grass and herbaceous vegetation that makes a

Map 2. The Ecological Zones of Darfur



valuable winter pasture for the camel and sheep owners of northern Darfur and Kordofan.

The Jebel Marra Range

To the south of the semi-desert zone starts the Jebel Si massif which is a part of the Jebel Marra range. The whole range is referred to here as "Jebel Marra range." It occupies the area between longitudes 24° and 24°30' E and latitudes 12°30' and 14°30' N. The range splits Darfur into roughly two equal halves and forms the watershed between the Nile and Lake Chad basins.

The main mass consists of igneous rocks. Volcanic eruptions in the past resulted in a large crater with two lakes (one salty and the other sweet). The highest peak in the range rises to about 10 140 feet above sea level.

Rainfall in Jebel Marra is fairly heavy, ranging between 600 mm and 1000 mm per annum (on the western slope). There are several all-the-year-round perennial streams that run in different parts of the Jebel and people use this water for the irrigation of orchards and vegetable gardens in the dry season. The northern part of the range "Jebel Si" receives less rain (between 500-600 mm per annum). It is also characterized by the lack of water in the dry season. Cultivation here is limited to the rainy season only (June-September). Bullrush millet, dried okra and tomato are the major products of Jebel Si farms.

In the whole range of Jebel Marra, cultivation is the major activity of the Fur population and the farmers are accustomed to using terraces in order to cultivate mountain slopes. The few animals they keep (cattle, goats and donkeys) feed on the mountain vegetation which is abundant and utilized sometimes by visiting nomadic groups.

Western Darfur Zone

This zone falls roughly between longitudes 22° and 24° east and latitudes 14°30' and 12° north. It is characterized by vast clay plains (with interspersing mountains), hence it is the most fertile part of Darfur. A number of great wadis that drain from the watershed of the Jebel Marra range flow across this zone. They provide a permanent water supply that encourages the settlement of the Fur along its banks. Cultivation is the main occupation of the settled Fur population but pastoral nomads (Arab and Zaghawa camel nomads from the north and Baggara from the south) visit the area in their dry season movements.

Of these wadis the most important is wadi Azum which flows via Zalingei to be joined by wadi Barei at Murnei and continues south-west to join the river Chari which flows into Lake Chad. The flow of wadi Azum and the others is seasonal (May-October). When it dries, water is usually reached at a depth of not more than three feet below the surface and many farms irrigate their dry

season gardens from such water. Traditionally this zone is known for its production of large quantities of dukhn and durra. It is known as the granary of Darfur and in times of famine people go there from all parts of the region to get the grain they need.

Eastern Darfur Zone (or Qoz)

East of Jebel Marra range, the land consists of continual sand (Ar. qoz). It lies roughly between 14°30' and 12° latitudes north.

It is mainly inhabited by a sedentary population whose major activity is cultivation. The vegetation consists of grasses, herbs and low scattered trees the size and density of which increase from north to south according to the amount of rainfall available. Rainfall ranges approximately between 300 mm and 550 mm per annum from north to south. The area is characterized by its lack of water during the dry season. In recent years efforts have been made to improve water supplies by excavation of hafirs (reservoir) and construction of deep artisan wells. At the beginning of this decade a large underground fresh-water reservoir has been discovered at Sag al-Naam, a few miles to the south-east of El Fasher, and planning is now underway to use this resource for promoting cultivation in the area.

There are fewer hills in this zone. It is also visited by pastoral nomads coming from the north in the dry season. The Baggara visit it in the rainy season in order to avoid the flies that harm their animals.

Southern Darfur Zone

The southern zone of Darfur extends between 12° parallel in the north and the Bahr al-Arab, which winds just north and south of the 10°th parallel north.

The land consists mainly of clay plains covered with thick bush (wet savannah). Rainfall is reasonably heavy ranging between 550 mm per annum near Nyala and 800 mm at Bahr al-Arab in the south.

It is mainly populated by Daju, Birgid and the Arab cattle nomads (Baggara is the collective name for them). The first two groups are mainly agriculturalists but the latter sometimes practise cultivation of millet to a limited degree. They move as far south as Bahr al-Arab in the dry season.(1) In the rainy season the flies endanger the lives of their cattle and force them to take refuge in the qoz zone in the north.

A recent development in this area is the growing importance of cultivation. This is due to a number of reasons the most important of which are: dispersal of population from the northern zone following the severe drought there, the realization of some pastoralists of the importance of cultivation, which lead them to practise transhumance, and finally government intervention to establish agricultural schemes.

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1. Some of them visit the western zone in the dry season, see Haaland 1972.

Pre-Islamic Darfur

Due to the lack of written documents, the history of Darfur in the middle ages remains very much a matter of speculation based on oral traditions and the information gathered by travellers since the late 18th century.[1] Another set of invaluable material has been made available to us by the colonial officials, some of whom were gifted scholars. A wide range of sources on the history of Darfur is given in the bibliography, but here reference will be made for quotations only.

To the Darfurians of today there are two things that remind them of pre-historic Darfur: the widespread dry stone buildings, which are much the feature of Darfur, and the mysterious name "Tora", who are believed to be the earliest inhabitants of the region in the jahiliya (Ar. pre-Islamic) period. Historians have speculated much about their origin and fate but the only definite thing seems to be that they disappeared after the beginning of dynastic kingdoms in Darfur.

The point of agreement between all historians of Darfur is that since "history" began Darfur has experienced the rise and fall of three successive dynasties, Daju, Tunjur and Fur (Keira). Balfour-Paul has summarized the basic facts about these dynasties in his booklet (History

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1. For detailed information on sources on Darfur history, see H. S. Umar's unpublished paper 1977 and S. R. O'Fahey 1972 and 1978.

and Antiquities of Darfur) from which the following lengthy quotation is worth noting:

> We can however, set down five points on which there is general agreement. Firstly, all three hegemonies owned their emergence to immigrants. Secondly, the Daju empire radiated from the southern half of our area, the Tunjur from the northern half, the Keira from the central massif. Thirdly, the dynasties succeeded each other without large-scale bloodshed. Fourthly, they were all highly centralised slave-based autocracies. Fifthly, though Islam may have first appeared as a court religion during the Tunjur empire, it only gained currency after Suleiman Solong made appearance in early Keira times. We may add that all three adopted the ancient Tora technique of dry-stone walling. (Balfour-Paul 1955: 9)

The early history of Darfur, therefore, appears to be a history of tribal migrations and tribal warfare. O'Fahey attaches similar importance to tribal migration which he considers to be a constant factor in the history of Darfur. He summarizes the major migration waves in this statement:

> Thus working crudely backwards in time, there is the constant factor of migration from west Africa and the Nile valley; the Zaghawa and Bideyat infiltration into the north-west; the emergence of the Baggara Belt as a distinct entity and the more exiguous movements of Arab camel nomads into and within the sāhel. Vastly earlier, according to the linguistic evidence, is the Nubian connexion of the Meidob and Birgid peoples, the possible movement from north-west of the Berti as remote precursors of the Zaghawa, and the apparently westward drift of the Daju. (O'Fahey 1978:5)

To the above one may add that although historical sources are doubtful about the handing-over of power from the

Daju to the Tunjur, they are less so about the succession of the Tunjur by the Fur/Keira. The story of this succession is mainly linked with the spread of Islam and the establishment of a famous multi-ethnic state in the 17th century Sudanic belt.

The Introduction of Islam and the Legend of the Wise Stranger

The spread of Islam in Darfur was strongly linked to its spread in central Bilād-al-Sudan[1] and the Nile valley. The process took place slowly and for a considerable period Islam came to be recognized as the state religion. This is confirmed by the fact that both the Wadai Kingdom in the west and the Sinnar Kingdom in the east adopted Islam before Darfur. The arrival of the Arab nomadic tribes, mainly through Wadai, accelerated this process. No specific dates are possible for that period, but traditional history is specially rich about how Islam was first embraced as the state religion at the court of the last Tunjur Sultan to rule Darfur.

There are many versions of the legend but they all share the fundamental assertion that Islam was introduced to the capital of the Kingdom by an Arab stranger who was welcomed by the then ruling sultan. As I have mentioned

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1. The expression means "land of the Sudan". It was used by medieval Arab travellers to denote the countries of sub-Saharan Africa. It is still used by historians to give the same meaning when referring to the early history of these countries.

elsewhere (Abdul-Jalil, 1974) one of the legendary stories runs like this:

> Ahmed al-Magur, a descendant of Abu Zeid of the Bani Hilal, and his brother Ali originally came from Tunis al-Khadra (Tunisia). As they wandered southwards in the desert with their herds of camels, a dispute took place between the two brothers. It is claimed that Ali's wife tried to seduce Ahmed while her husband was away fetching water. Ahmed was passive and his brother's wife became disappointed. When Ali came back she told him that Ahmed tried to "make her a wife". Ali became angry and immediately attacked his brother with a sword, cutting one of his heel, and left him in the desert.(1)
>
> Continuing his journey southwards Ahmed soon came to a big settlement which was then the capital of the Tunjur kingdom.(2) The king (addressed as sultan) and his people were pagans who never knew how to eat properly and were always hungry. Ahmed first joined the people outside the sultan's palace. He told them that he was capable of making them satisfied with the food. He let them wait until all the food arrived, then asked them to wash their hands and recite the basmala.(3) The people were satisfied for the first time and took the good news to the sultan (Shaw Dorseid) who ordered his men to bring the man so that he may teach him (the sultan) how to be satisfied with his food. Ahmed told the sultan to do the same thing that his men were told before him. The sultan was happy with the result and became curious to know the secret behind the power of his guest/stranger. Ahmed then told him about the new religion and started to teach him the principles of Islam. The sultan became a Muslim and so did his people.
>
> As a reward to Ahmed, he gave him his daughter Kheira in marriage. (4) She begot him a son

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1. He is nicknamed Al-Magur (Arabic - hamstrung) becuase of his injured heel.
2. The place is reported by some as "Ein Farah" and by others as "Uri", both in the Furnung mountains north of Kutum.
3. The Koranic verse, "In the name of Allah, the Almighty, the Merciful."
4. The Keira clan of the Fur are supposed to be her descendants.

> called Suleiman Solong (because of his light complexion). Suleiman became the founder of the Keira Sultanate in Darfur.

According to Sayyid Hamid Hurreiz, the story of Ahmed Al-Magur described above is one of many legends of the same nature that are widespread in the Sudanic belt today. He holds that all the legends portray a cultural hero who is always a "stranger". The "wise stranger" is then given the role of social change which is associated with miraculous happenings. Hurreiz writes:

> The founding of a new cultural phase among the Fur is associated with Suleiman who is the offspring of the wise stranger, Ahmad al-Ma'gūr (according to the legend). The "strangeness" of Suleiman is confirmed further by his nickname "Solong" (meaning Arab in the Fur language) in an attempt to link him ethnically with the Arabs and culturally with Islam. (Hurreiz 1977:4)

Furthermore the legend also reflects the obscure nature of the relationship between the Tunjur and Keira dynasties. Most importantly it casts a shadow on the problem of origins of both the Tunjur and Fur ethnic groups. What can be concluded from this ambiguity is that the rise of the Keira dynasty to power was a peaceful one and probably through a matrilineal succession.

The Keira Sultanate

O'Fahey is by far the most distinguished contemporary historian of the Keira Sultanate. Besides his Ph.D. thesis (1972) he has published a joint book with Spaulding and half a dozen articles on the history of Darfur and

related subjects. His latest book is to be published shortly. Summarizing such a vast material is not an easy task but for our purposes emphasis will be laid on the most outstanding events and trends of socio-political nature.

As a general point to be made from the start, it must be noted that all the existing historical and ethnographic material about the Keira sultanate is limited to stories of particular sultans and at best accounts of central political institutions. This is no fault of the scholars but rather due to the lack of documented history. Archeological research is scanty and linguistic research is still underway.

O'Fahey has noticed that the Fur traditions of migration suggest a steady movement through and away from the mountains. It is in the mountains that are to be found the most tangible evidence of the early Keira state. Daali, the Fur "law-giver", and Suleiman Solong are still remembered through their stone palaces at Jabal Foga and Jabal Nami.

Suleiman was the first historical ruler of the Keira dynasty and is dated approximately to the mid-seventeenth century. In O'Fahey's words:

> It was Sulayman who initiated the expansion of the Kingdom beyond the mountains, who transformed the old-established Fur kingdom into a multi-ethnic empire, who began the move down onto the Savannas. (O'Fahey 1978:13)

He also speculates on the origins of the sultanate:

> The Keira clan, who came from the Kunjara section of the Fur, ruled a kingdom in Jabal Marra which formed a part of the Tunjur empire, to whose ruling dynasty they may have been connected by dynastic marriage. (O'Fahey 1978:117)

In view of the present state of knowledge in this area, the above interpretation at least offers a solution to the problem of succession which is apparently contradictory in the legend of Ahmed al-Magur.

Nachtigal mentions in his book "Sahara and Sudan" that Suleiman was especially remembered as a warrior for he himself led a thirty-three military expeditions which resulted in the domination of the Oro, Birgid, Zaghawa, Mararit, Bego, Tunjur and Berti "tribes" plus some sections of the Masalit "tribe." He extended the boundaries of his country as far as river Atbara east of the Nile and in the north as far as Bideyat land. This expansion of the sultanate in the mid-seventeenth century coincided with the flourishing of trade along the darb al-arbain (the forty-days road) which links Darfur with Egypt. Indeed, the expansion of the trade could as well be counted as a contributing factor to the rise and expansion of the sultanate. Although O'Fahey refers to the possibility of Keira inheriting a trading network from the Tunjur, he suggests the operation of other factors, in addition to the first one, that made the expansion possible. He writes:

> Other factors were probably as significant, Fur numerical superiority, their expanding control of the most fertile regions and the central strategic position of Jabal Marra. The human factor may be found in Fur cohesiveness, in, for example, an age-grade system that could mobilize the young men of a district, the jureŋa, for war led by an ɔrnaŋ or war chief appointed by the elders. (O'Fahey 1978:14)

Suleiman's successors tried to expand the sultanate westwards and engaged in a series of wars with the neighbouring sultanate of Wadai. This state of affairs lasted for over a century. The same period was also characterized by internal conflicts which reflected the tendency towards an Islamized centralized state (with the necessary participation of different ethnic groups) and the opposition of Fur elite whose position was threatened by the new tendency. The deaths of Sultan Umar Lel (1730-39) and Sultan Abul Qasim (1739-52) were probably a manifestation of internal conflicts.(1)

Meanwhile, the influx of fuqara (Arabic, learned men) from east and west continued and commercial ties with Egypt increased. Darfur started to look eastwards, to the Nile, and Tayrab, Abul Qasim's successor, managed to reconquer Kordofan in 1785-86. He also reached as far as Omdurman on the Nile.(2) However, Tayrab's death at Bara (while he was returning from the invasion) gave rise

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1. They were said to have died in the Wadai wars due to the disloyalty and conflict inside their armies.
2. Sources of oral traditions mention that Tayrab reached Al-Matamma and Shendi, north of Omdurman, on the Nile.

to a bitter civil war that invoked ethnic loyalties. For three years, Ishāq (Tayrab's son) and his Zaghawa followers fought against the newly installed Sultan Abd Al-Rahman with his predominantly Fur supporters.

Although the victory of Abd Al-Rahman may be seen as a support for the Fur cause, his reign marked the beginning of a more sophisticated state in which people from different ethnic backgrounds participated. For, with the exception of the office of the sultan, all the other offices were open to everybody who could win the admiration of the sultan. Thus the famous slave eunuch Mohammad Kurra was made the Abu Shaikh during the reign of Abd Al-Rahman and he virtually ruled the country for three years when Abd Al-Rahman's successor, Mohammad Fadl, was still adolescent. By that time the sultanate was no longer a tribal enterprise. In O'Fahey's words:

> The old Fur war lords tended to fade into obscurity, to be replaced by adventurers, slave confidants and eunuchs, court <u>fuqarā</u> and <u>ulamā</u> and merchants. (O'Fahey 1978:16)

To the above categories of elites one may add the tribal chiefs whose leadership over their people has been recognized by successive sultans. However, the fact remains that politics at the centre was deeply influenced by factional interests. Although the influence of non-Darfurian elements increased, the Fur elite never ceased to work their way back to the court.

By the beginning of the second decade of the 19th century, the sultanate started to decline. The Turco-

Egyptian force invaded northern Sudan and destroyed the Darfur garrison in Kordofan in 1821. This put the sultanate on the defensive. The sultan of the time, Mohammad Al-Fadl, tried to regain Kordofan from its conquerors but he failed. Both he and his successor Mohammad Al-Hussein had spent a lot of time fighting the Arab nomadic tribes that occupied the fringes of the sultanate. The camel-nomads of the north were relatively easier to defeat and were subdued by the administration. One reason for this was perhaps because they had no territory of their own, but roamed in Zaghawa and Tunjur countries. On the other hand, the cattle-nomads (Baggara) of the southern fringe were never fully incorporated into the administrative system of the sultanate. Moreover, the area they occupied was critical to the survival of the elite, for the sultanate depended on ivory and slaves that were brought from western Bahr Al-Gazal to be sold to the Egyptians from whom luxury goods and later firearms were purchased.

By the mid 19th century there were drastic changes that laid the foundation for Darfur's incorporation into the rest of the Sudan. While sultan Mohammad Al-Hussein was involved in directing more raids on the troublesome cattle-nomads of southern Darfur (Rizeigāt, Bani Halba, Mālia), a Ja'ali trader from the Nile, Al-Zubayr Rahma, arrived in Bahr Al-Gazal. By 1865, Al-Zubayr established himself as the ruler of a large trading state. Sooner he came into conflict with the Turco-Egyptian anti-slavery

measures and the White Nile route was no longer safe for his ivory and slaves to be taken northwards. Al-Zubayr cultivated the state of conflict between the Rizeigāt and the Sultan of Darfur and he made an agreement with 80 Rizeigāt shaikhs to secure the passage of his caravans through their land in return for a payment of a toll.

The Darfur rulers became furious because this agreement meant the blocking of their major trade interest in Bahr al-Gazal and they retaliated in a series of raids against the Rizeigāt and later attacked one of Al-Zubayr's caravans. In the same year, 1873, Sultan Hussein died and was succeeded by his son Ibrahim. To his bad luck, enemy forces encroached on the sultanate from east (Turco-Egyptians) and south (Al-Zubayr). After unsuccessful battles between the Sultan's army and the more well-equipped army of Al-Zubayr, the Sultan himself led his people against the enemy only to be defeated and killed at Manawashi in October 1874 by Al-Zubayr.

Subsequent Political Developments

The following period in the history of Darfur was characterized by resistance. Theobald writes:

> While the Egyptians had no difficulty in occupying the main centres of population in Darfur, the country was never completely conquered, for until the accession of 'Ali Dinār in 1898 six shadowy "sultans" in turn controlled at least the Jebel Marra region, and their claim to the rule of Darfur was never extinguished. (Theobald 1965:21)

The Turco-Egyptian administration, which was largely a military one, lasted only for nine years, for the occupation of Kordofan by the Mahdi in 1883 and the surrender of Slatin put an end to that era.[1]

The people of Darfur joined the Mahdi half-heartedly for many tribes never gave up the hope of restoring their own independence. The Baggara of the south were the first to join but the Fur and neighbouring "tribes" were reluctant. It took some time for the Mahdist leaders in El Fasher to bring under control groups such as Meidob, Zaghawa and the camel-nomads of northern Darfur (mainly Mahiriya). Musa Al-Mubarak Al-Hasan (1971) has rightly argued in his book "The Political History of Darfur" (in Arabic), that the majority of the people of Darfur resisted the Mahdist rule in the same way as they did with the Turco-Egyptian rule.

Although each group had its own reasons for so doing, one major factor was common to all of them and that is the desire for relative independence of ethnic groups in their homelands (dar) which they have been used to during the Keira rule. This may explain why many groups had supported the rebel shadowy "sultans" at one stage or another. The brutality of Egyptian and, later, Mahdist soldiers was also an additional factor.

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1. Slatin was an Austrian officer who became the governor of Darfur in 1881.

When the Mahdist state was destroyed by the Anglo -Egyptian forces in 1898, Ali Dinar, who was in Omdurman at that time, quickly went back to Darfur and established himself as sultan. He tried to restore the old prestige of the sultanate and modified the old administrative system. The second Keira sultanate, however, did not last long for in 1916 the condominium government annexed Darfur to the rest of the Sudan after defeating the Sultan's army near El Fasher.

The new administration revived the old districts of Darfur based at El Fasher, Kutum, Um Keddada, Zalingei, Nyala and Geneina. Traditional offices above the district level were abandoned. Although an attempt was made to introduce the Nigerian system of Emirates failed, a subsequent attempt to restore the magdumate system did not yield any success.(1) Below the district commissioner, nazirs and shartaies were restored on traditional hereditary basis. Below them came mulūk, damalij and omdas, then village shaikhs. As the British policy in Sudan was that of indirect rule, "tribal" groups gained their autonomy under the D.C. according to what came to be known as native administration. This policy was further supported by holding "tribal" gatherings, "zeffa", in which chiefs parade with their people and meetings between chiefs and officials took place. "Inter-tribal" questions were settled in such meetings. The "zeffa" was held at

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1. The Magdum is the commissioner of the Sultan entrusted with the administration of a district.

different places each time with one chief as the host. The condiminium government of the Sudan ended in 1956.

The various independent Sudanese governments carried on with the system inherited from the colonial days. In 1972 the present government abolished the native administration and substituted for it a system of "people's councils" which depends on elected councillors from the constituencies of a district. But the offices of omda and shaikh are still kept. The same act put an end to the dual authorities which "tribal" chiefs enjoyed for they were administrators as well as judges. Under the new system, a separate council of judges is appointed and its members entrusted with the task of the administration of justice according to customary law.

Trade in the Darfur sultanate

The importance of trade in the formation of the sultanate has already been indicated. Generally speaking, the long-distance caravan trade was largely practised by immigrant adventurers and trade routes were secured by the state. Internal trade was dominated by indigenous traders. The long distance trade was largely an exchange of luxury goods and firearms, while the internal trade was mostly concerned with basic supplies (food and clothing). This dichotomy was probably responsible for the association of the elite, and so the state, with the first and not the second type of trading activity.

The main trading routes were:

a) The trans-Saharan route, which is divided into two routes:

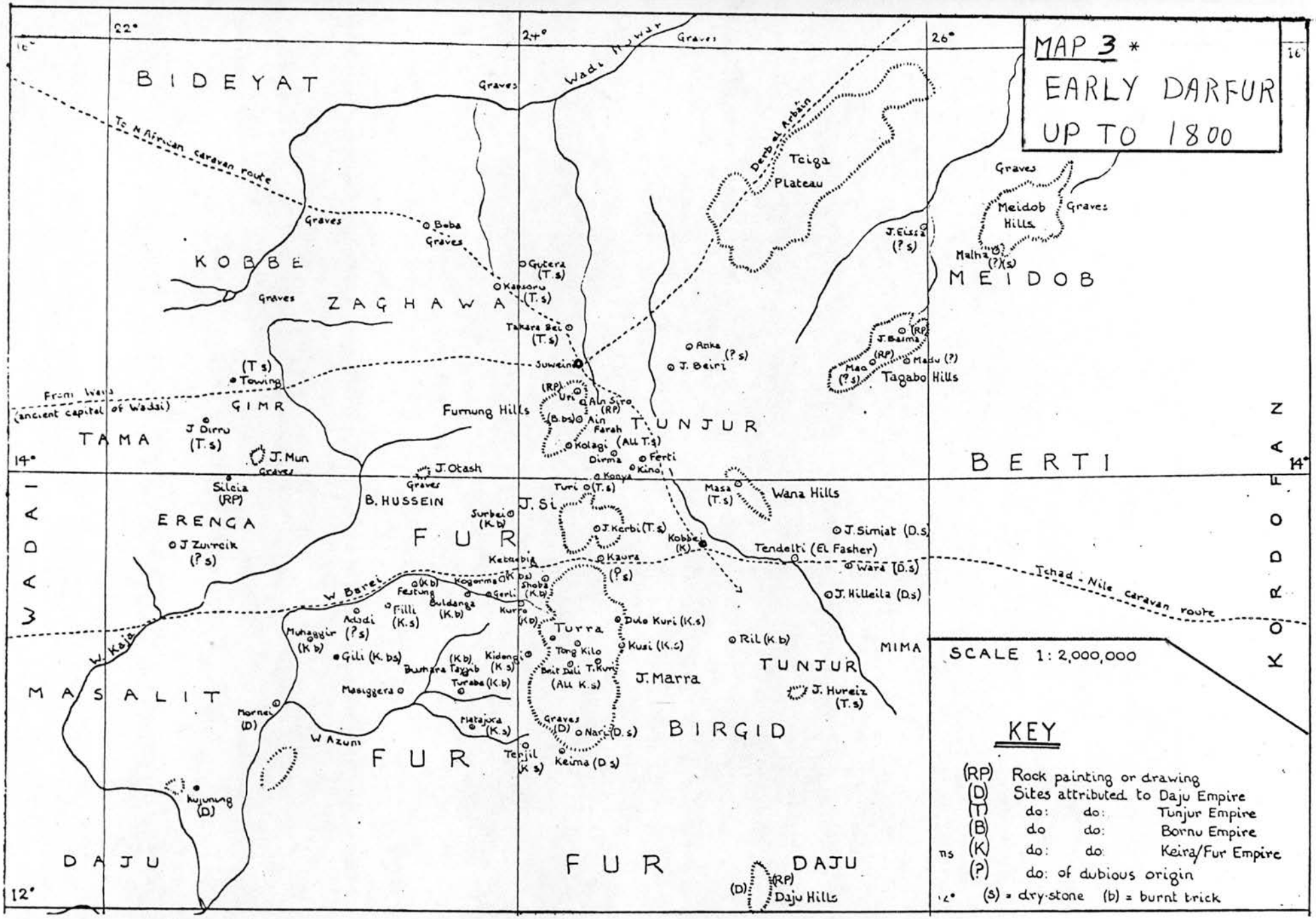
   1. Darb al-arbain (forty-days road) linked Darfur with Egypt.
   2. Another road to the north-west linked Darfur with Tunis and Tripoli (via Fezzan).

b) The trans-Sudanic route which radiates from Darfur:

   1. Eastwards to Kordofan, Sinnar, Red Sea and Arabia.
   2. Westwards to Wadai, Bornu and Western Bilad al-Sudan.

c) The internal trading network depended on ecological variations of different regions within the state. Jebel Marra and western Darfur had always dominated this scene because of the wide range of its agricultural products owing to its favourable climatic conditions. On the other hand the northern zone was the major supply for livestock and its products.

The features of economic interdependence between different ecological zones in Darfur need to be emphasized. Although it is very difficult to generalize here, I can safely argue that the exchange of goods between various parts of the region is as old as the history of the Darfur sultanate itself. Furthermore I would particularly stress the role of the internal trade between the northern zone



* Reproduced from: Balfour-Paul (1955)

and the Jebel Marra and western zones. Today, northern Darfur depends largely on the latter zones for the supply of grain, dried okra and tomatoes, peanuts and spices. This is reciprocated, though to a lesser degree, with the import of livestock from the north.

Historians of Darfur (e.g. O'Fahey 1972) have largely emphasized the role of external trade in the development of the Keira sultanate in Darfur, while failing to acknowledge the role of the internal trade in the formation of the state in the first place. In view of the expansion of the sultanate from the Jebel Marra massif, it is not difficult to relate the process to the state of agricultural production in the area. To start with, the employment of large numbers of warriors requires a certain level of food supply which in turn requires the existence of production surplus. One can also argue that long-distance conquests require animals to be used as mounts and for baggage.

I do not wish to enter a discussion of the economics of state formation in Darfur, but rather I wish to show that it is an important factor to be considered in this connection. The importance of the Fur in that process demands such consideration.

Ethnic group relations in Darfur are not divorced from either the political history of the region or the realities of economic interdependence between its different parts (zones). Fur-Zaghawa relations are a good example that illustrate the validity of this point

of view (see sections on history and trade in Darfur in this chapter). More information on the economic activities of these two groups will be given in the next two chapters, which I hope will clarify the above points.

Short Notes on the Main Ethnic Groups Inhabiting Northern Darfur

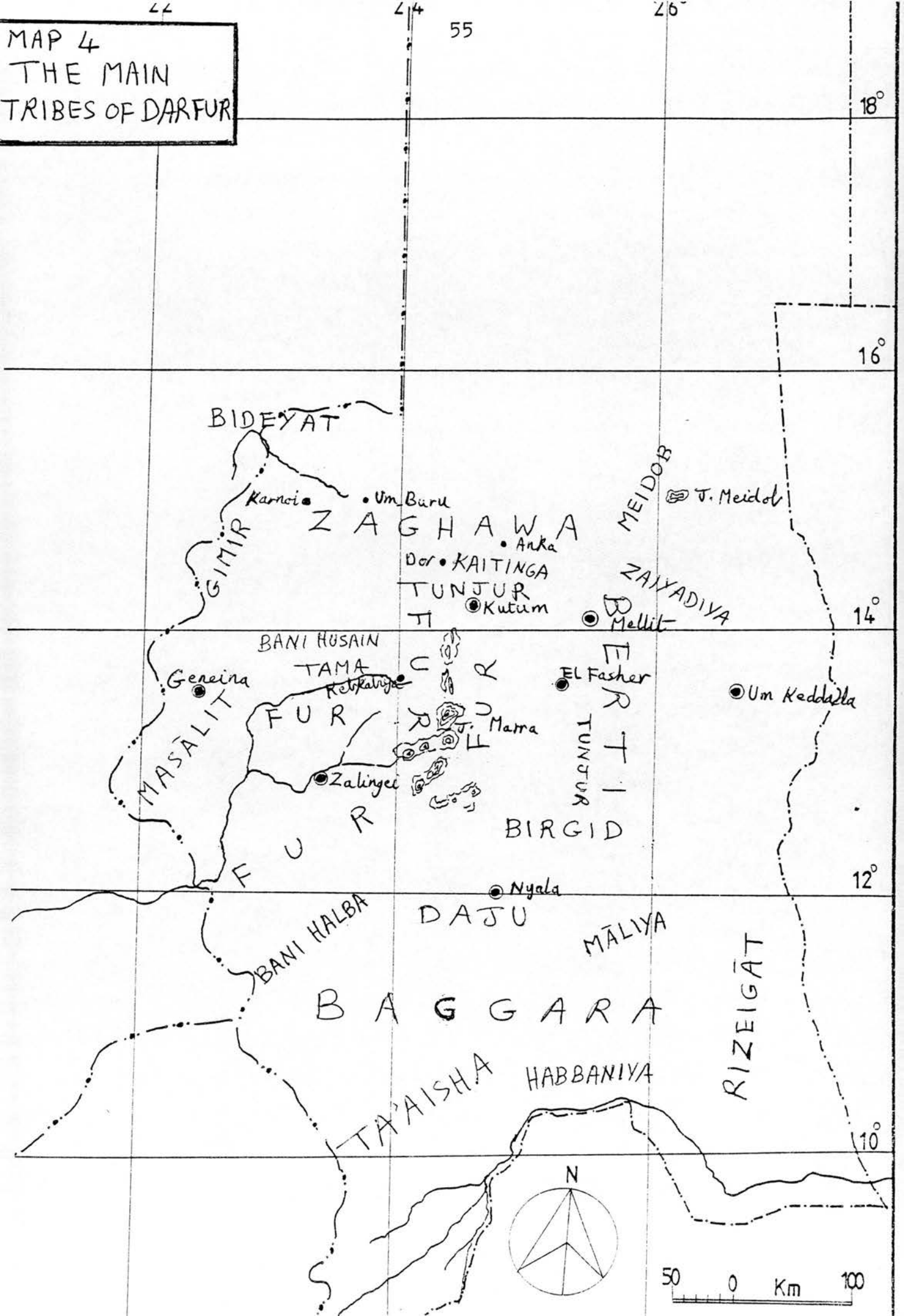
Zaghawa

Together with the Bideyat they form the Beri people. The Zaghawa occupy the north-western area of Darfur, just to the south of the Bideyāt. Mac Michael described them as Tibu with Libyo-Berber affinities. They are traditionally livestock-breeders who practice trans-humance. Because their environment is harsh and competitive, the Zaghawa are rather difficult to administer. This has led to a development of stereotype view of the Zaghawa. Theobald acknowledged this when he wrote:

> Until the coming of the condominium government, they were notorious as camel thieves, and even today they are regarded as the wildest and most difficult of all Darfur tribes. (Theobald 1965:9)

Bideyāt

The majority of the population of this group lives in Chad round Ennedi Plateau. They are largely nomadic pastoralists who depend on camel breeding and wild fruit gathering to obtain their living. They wander as far south as Kutum and Kebkabiya in their dry-season migration to look for pasture for their animals and grain for themselves.


MAP 4
THE MAIN
TRIBES OF DARFUR
22
24
26
55
18°
16°
14°
12°
10°
BIDEYAT
Karnoi
Um Buru
ZAGHAWA
Anka
Dor
KAITINGA
TUNJUR
Kutum
GIMIR
MEIDOB
J. Meidob
ZAYADIYA
Mellit
BANI HUSAIN
TAMA
Kebkabiya
Gereina
EL Fasher
Um Kaddada
MASALIT
FUR
J. Marra
Zalingei
TUNJUR
BIRGID
Nyala
DAJU
BANI HALBA
MĀLIYA
BAGGARA
TA'AISHA
HABBANIYA
RIZEIGĀT
N
50
0
Km
100

Ethnically, the Bideyat are thought to be related to the Zaghawa. Both groups speak languages intelligible to each other. On the other hand, there are many Zaghawa clan names that correspond to Bideyāt ones. In many cases the members of such clans themselves claim a Bideyāt origin. Contrary to such claims, outside observers think of the Bideyāt as being an "extreme" case of Zaghawa. Quoted by Theobald (1965:9) MacMichael describes the Bideyāt, in comparison with Zaghawa:

> darker, wilder, worse thieves, more independent, more treacherous, and they live further north.

Meidob

This group inhabits the extreme north-east part of the region where the extremely isolated Jebel Meidob represents the heart of their land. The Meidob are semi-nomadic and primarily breeders of sheep and goats. They also keep cattle, camels and donkeys. Regarding their origin, it is believed that they came from Nubia (on the Nile) prior to the penetration of Islam in northern Sudan. Even today, there are close similarities between their language and that of the Mahasi Nubians.(1)

Zaiyadiya

One of the largest camel-owning Arab groups in Darfur. They live between the Meidob in the north and the Berti in the south. They were originally nomadic but

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1. MacMichael (1912).

nowadays some of them have tended to settle in villages and small towns (engaging in cultivation and trade). They diversified their interests in sheep, camels and urban trading.

Arab camel-nomads

There are various groups of Arab camel-nomads that roam about between northern and western Darfur. They are, perhaps, relatively recent migrants to the region. They mainly come to northern Darfur during the rainy season when insects become harmful to their animals and the clay soil gets muddy in the relatively wet areas south and west of the Jebel Marra massif. They find a good resort in the sandy land of the north where there is sufficient grazing after the first rains. When the rain is over they continue further north to graze the gizu in winter.

The nomadic Arab groups have a particular history of feuds with the Zaghawa mainly because of competition over pasture and water resources. Their major groupings are: Maʿahiriya, Jallūl, and Mahāmīd.

Berti

The original home of the Berti is around Tagabo hills, between Jebel Meidob and El Fasher. As a result of different factors that stimulated migration, many of them have settled in the Qoz of eastern Darfur. Such factors include oppression by Fur Sultans, southward pressure by the Zaghawa plus the changing climate. It is important to mention here that the Berti are entirely

sedentary cultivators. The Berti of today speak only one language, Arabic. Some scholars (mainly MacMichael) have managed to record a few words from their dead language and were attracted by the similarities it bears with the Zaghawa language. He therefore concluded that the Berti originated from the same group as the Zaghawa. The verification of such assertions is extremely difficult at the moment for lack of conclusive evidence.

Tunjur

This group is associated with the second dynastic kingdom in Darfur which ended at the beginning of the 17th century. There are conflicting views about their origin but all traditions agree that they had migrated to Darfur either from the north (libya and Tunis) or from Nubia on the Nile.

The first hypothesis (advocated by Arkell) asserts that they are of Berber origin. The second hypothesis (suggested by MacMichael) claims that they branched from Mahasi Nubians and that they were Christians when they first arrived in Darfur. The elders of the Tunjur, however, hold that their forebearers were members of the Abbasi clan in Arabia and that they came to Darfur from Egypt.(1) The present population of the Tunjur is scattered all over Darfur (and some in Wadai). However, their main centres are now around Kutum and Jebel Huraiz

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1. This view was given to me by the local faki and historian Adam Ahmed who lives in Kutum.

south of El Fasher. Tunjur elders think that many branches of their group changed their identities in the last three centuries because of the cruelty of Keira sultans towards them. The Keira sultans, it is claimed, have always feared that the Tunjur might want to restore their lost throne.

Kaitinga

A controversial group of a few thousand people scattered among the Tunjur and Zaghawa north and east of Kutum. They are traditionally associated with the royal families of Dar Beiri and Sueini which are still headed by Kaitinga chiefs. They are known to have arrived in northern Darfur from Jebel Marra during the heyday of the Keira sultanate.

Occupationally, the Kaitinga are found as transhumant livestock breeders in some places (north of Dor) as well as cultivators in other places (south of Dor).

Fur

They are considered to be one of the original ethnic groups of Darfur as there is no history of migration regarding their ancestors. Their main home has been the Jebel Marra massif and its prolonged extensions to the north (Jebel Si). The majority of the Fur live today in the plains to the south and south-west of Jebel Marra (western Darfur zone). Being the largest cultivating group in Darfur, the Fur are also the most numerous group. Whether the name of the region itself is due to

the large number of Fur population or to the importance of the Fur as the group associated with the last ruling dynasty since the 17th century, is difficult to decide. The fact remains that they are a major and important group in the recent history of the region which carries their name, "Darfur" (Arabic, the land of the Fur).

CHAPTER III

THE FUR

Origin, Location and Traditional History

As mentioned earlier, the Fur people, apart from the royal "Keira" clan, have no tradition of migration from outside Darfur. Indeed, all the historians of Darfur consider them to be one of the aboriginal groups which have been living in this region since time immemorial. However, the conflicting views and explanations of the origin and formation of the group deserves a discussion. H. MacMichael treats the problem from a "race" perspective. He writes:

> Now the Fur of Gebel Marra and Si and the Fur of the west, in fact the Fur in general with the exception of the KUNGARA branch, are socially, physically, and intellectually inferior to the average of the tribes who are their neighbours to the east and north. But it is the KUNGARA whose virility has preserved to the race the predominance which was gained some three centuries ago by their ancestors, and this superiority of the KUNGARA is evidently due to an Arab strain which they have acquired. (MacMichael, 1922:91)

Tracing the origin of the Fur further back, MacMichael discovers that the group includes some ex-Fertit members as well.

> Even though there may be an original substratum which is of distinctively "Fur" origin, there are the traditional grounds quoted for supposing that various FERTIT tribes have become grafted

> upon this stem to such an extent that the Fur of the present have quite as large element of the Fertit in their composition as of true Fur. (MacMichael 1922:94) (1)

Before commenting on MacMichael's views about the Fur, it is worthwhile quoting another historian of his generation who also contributed a great deal to documenting the history of Darfur. Writing 29 years later in "Sudan Notes and Records" A. J. Arkell asserted that the Fur are the original "negro inhabitants" of the country. Still addressing the race question, he explores the origin of the Fur using a crude socio-linguistic approach. Arkell writes:

> The Fur have no definite name for themselves as a tribe. After more than two centuries under sultans, who, whatever their origin, towards the end of the dynasty were indistinguishable from their negro subjects in appearance, and who were known to outsiders as the sultans of the Fur any original stigma there may have been in the name Fur had been forgotten; yet if a Fur man today is asked to what tribe he belongs, he will not readily say "Fur". If he can claim any relationship with the Fur sultans he will say Keira, and if not, he will usually try Konjara, a more general name for the aristocratic Fur; and failing that he may even try Musabát. (Arkell 1951:52)

The writer goes on to establish a connection between the Fur and Fertit in a fashion slightly different from that employed by MacMichael:

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1. The Fertit are now living in western Bahr al-Ghazal, adjacent to southern Darfur.

> If pressed about their own origin, the Fur will tell you that Fir and Firat were brothers, and that they are descended from Fir, while the Fertit are descended from Firat. (Arkell 1951:58)

As Arkell himself mentioned, in Darfur the word "Fertit" is not used as a"tribal"name but rather as synonymous to "pagan" and is applied to the peoples of western Bahr al-Ghazal. The ethnic dichotomies, in terms of religion, are quite obvious in this case since the word Fertit identifies the non-Muslim from Muslim groups. But "Fur" does not equal "Muslim", which makes Arkell's argument weaker. Furthermore, he reports that informants at Turra told him that Fur is not a race but a language, originally the language of the Kora Kwa, the inhabitants of Jebel Si. Arkell then invokes a story, told to him by Fur informants, to support his linguistic theory on the origin of the Fur. The story also throws light on the role played by northern Darfur in the development of a centralized state in the region. Arkell reports:

> In a discussion with Mohammad Ahmed, a great-grandson of Sultan Mohammad Fadl, and a number of elders from Dar Dima in Western Darfur, I was given an account of the course of events in Darfur during medieval times, which sheds considerable light on the origin of the Fur. To these old men, "the land of the Fur" meant what is now called Western Darfur, i.e. the country on the west side of Jebel Marra range, lying roughly between Kebkebia and Dar Fungoro. This area, they said, was originally inhabited by tribes such as the Binga, the Banda, and the Gula. The first sultan who introduced Islam lived in northern Darfur. He gradually spread his empire further south by sending in turn to the "King" of each hill, saying "Become Muslim or I will

> fight you". Given this alternative most people fled south, and were henceforth known as Fertit, leaving much of what is now Dar Fur uninhabited, to occupy which the Sultans used to introduce foreigners. Those on the other hand who accepted Islam and submitted to the rule of the sultan were known as Fur. (Arkell 1951:53)

The broad implications of the above story is that there has been a major population movement southwards which was initiated by pressure from the north. That pressure is associated with the introduction of Islam to the region and consequently the formation of a centralized state. Beyond this, any specific claims are difficult to prove. Arkell, however, reaches the conclusion that the Fur must therefore be the black subjects of the early Berber speaking sultans of Darfur. This he arrived at by comparing the word "Kora" with other words in Berber language. It is clear from the statements of both MacMichael and Arkell that the evidence on the origin of Fur is speculative because of the lack of written documents and the statements by local informants are contradictory. More interdisciplinary research is needed in order to verify these statements.

For the moment we can only say that the Fur people have been residing in the places they occupy today since before the seventeenth century (prior to the beginning of the Keira rule). They are divided into three main sections, Kunjara, Karakirit and Tumurké. The Kunjara live east and north of Jebel Marra, though they are to be found mixed with other Fur in the west. The Karakirit are

mainly the people of Jebel Si, and the Tumurké occupy the zone of western Darfur. These are only approximations, for in reality people are greatly intermixed.

As to the territories of the Fur in general, they occupy roughly the area from meridian 12° and northwards up to Furnung and Furuk. With the exception of mountain dwellers, the Fur are today mixed with people from other groups. This is especially true of the inhabitants of plains to the east and north of Jebels Marra and Si. In the present study, my main concern will be with the Fur inhabiting Jebel Si (dars of Sembé Kara, Sembé Kuri and part of Inga), Furnung, Furuk and parts of Sueini. As a matter of fact the Fur in these dars are mostly mixed with Tunjur and other elements.

When asked about their ancestors, they usually invoke one version or another of Ahmed al-Magur legend. They all agree that Suleiman Solong is the "ancestor" of the Fur. The contradictory claims made by the legend (mainly that an Arab stranger married a Tunjur princess and begot Suleiman who became the ancestor of the Fur) are resolved, by the people, by claiming that the Fur and Tunjur are the same.(1) Still this would not justify the claim that Suleiman Solong is the ancestor of the Fur. However, what matters to us here is not the absolute facts of biological ancestry, but the relevance of the claim in terms of social organization. This alternative, which I

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1. An informant from Deblé, near Turra, told me that the Tunjur are one of the Fur clans.

term the "sociological alternative", we shall deal with at the end of this chapter.

Descent groups and local communities

Among the Fur there are no corporate descent groups beyond the extended family. The members of an extended family share general interests in matters regarding land, marriage and the general security of the members. Inheritance, which is organized according to Islamic sharia law, is also largely limited to this group. This applies to mobile property only, for land is still administered according to customary codes. Rights over land are only rights of administration and not of absolute ownership. The head of the family exercises these rights on behalf of his group and when he dies, these rights are passed on to one of the heirs. As such there are no prospects for larger corporate groups to be formed in relation to rights over land.

The general rules of descent show a slight patrilineal bias. The people say that the father is the "bone" and the mother the "flesh" which imply the relative status of patri-kin and matri-kin in terms of rights and duties towards the individual. This bias is specially manifested in payment of blood-money where the agnatic kin play the leading role. In such cases the situation is considered to be a confrontation between two agnatic groups. Extended families are also seen as "wife-givers" and "wife-takers".

Distant kinsmen are always involved in these activities but they take a secondary role to that of the individual's extended family. An important thing to notice here is that the kin-groupings are non-unilineal. Furthermore, the maternal kin are not excluded from the above activities. As well as contributing towards the payment of blood-money, they are given a he-goat to consume in case of a marriage transaction. According to the sharia law of inheritance, the ego may inherit his mother's property (but not his maternal uncle's). Among the Fur of Furuk, a man may inherit his mother's farm.

Haaland has rightly described the problem of named groups among the Fur as "intricate" one.[1] The clan "orré" is the only kinship group between the extended family and the whole group. The recognition of such groups is arbitrary and depends on geographical and political factors. This is confirmed by the fact that people generally do not remember their ancestors beyond the second grandfather. Further knowledge is only found among the traditionally educated class of fakis (religious men) who compile lists of genealogies that are suspectedly fictitious.

The clan is usually identified with a certain animal brand (Arabic, wasim or nar). Although members of such clans claim descent from a common ancestor the criteria for recruitment of membership are not exclusively based on descent rules. MacMichael was struck by this fact which led him to say the following about Fur clans:

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1. In an appendix to O'Fahey's thesis (1972).

> It is at once obvious as one travells in Darfur and enquires as to inter-relationships and groupings of the Fur that their sub-divisions, apart perhaps, from the main groups of KUNGARA, KARAKIRIT and TEMURKA are local or totemistic in origin rather than linear. Their names are taken, not from a common ancestor, but either from some hill or valley, or some bird or beast or grass. (MacMichael

The fact is that some ancestors are named (or nick-named) after physical entities. The point I want to make is that these groups or clans are not exclusive descent groups but they are not totemistic either. There are examples of groups that are remnants of political functionaries from the heyday of the Keira sultanate.[1] There is no evidence that these offices were exclusively held by descent groups or that they were inherited.

One more point to be made about Fur clans is that they have a limited potential for corporate action. Since clans are not territorial units their effect on the individual is minimal. There are no communal rituals to consolidate the interest of such members. Feud is theoretically the only situation that provokes corporate action. As a matter of fact only the ego's effective network is involved or mobilized for support when feud takes place. However, the fact that the Darfur sultanate represented a centralized state reduced the chances for small groups to promote corporate political action.

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1. Andanga (the scouts to the sultan's army), Sarenga (the swordsmen), Jobanga (the taxmen), and Kursinga (the commissioners).

In contradistinction to the clan there is an ego-centred group call "ahal" (Arabic, relatives). The word can be translated as "kindred". No two people share the same network of ahal apart from full siblings. The relationship is that of mutual support. Such support can be mobilized at any time anywhere and there are no rules for it other than the moral obligation. As such, the ahal is a flexible and dynamic group which the individual can mobilize in times of need. M. C. Jedrej has noticed a similar situation among the Sewa Mende of Sierra Leone. He writes about the group "ndehubla" which represents the ego's kinsmen,

> The function of the ndehubla is, in its mobilisation, essentially contingent upon the crises that Ego will encounter during his life cycle.... However it is usually on ego's death that all his kinsmen will assemble. In such an instance the group will approximate to his "ideal" ndehubla. Otherwise the group that is mobilised is usually coterminus with the local domestic group and may even include affines and non-kin. (Jedrej 1970:86)

The function of the ahal among the Fur is very similar to that of the ndehubla among the Sewa Mende. The individual is likely to see the majority of them on the occasions of circumcision (in case of male members) and marriage. Death of the ego is the most likely event to bring them all. The Fur usually wait until all the relatives within reasonable distance have arrived before they bury the dead person. The only difference between the ndehubla and the ahal is that the latter is not an inheriting group. As

mentioned earlier, the Islamic laws of inheritance, which are in firm practice among the Fur, limit the circulation of wealth to the smallest possible group: the extended family.

It is clear then that the economic and other forms of co-operation are best operated between the individual and his kinsmen with whom he resides. The optimal form of residence is therefore the virilocal type. However, this is only a normative preference but the actual choice of residence by different individuals vary according to the circumstances each is facing. Many Fur reside uxorilocally and bilocally, but the frequency of these last two types can only be assessed through actual census. It would be a safe conclusion to say that the Fur manipulate different normative rules the result of which is the actual pattern of residence in each community.

Concepts on Processes Relating to Residence and Territory

The Fur use a series of words to refer to spacial distribution of people:

tong	house
tigé	neighbourhood
hillé	village
buro	land/country

The word tong refers to the house as a locality. At the same time it refers to the group of people associated with

the house as in the phrase tong kwa (people of the house). In the second sense it is equivalent to a domestic group. Furthermore, strangers and children of relatives currently residing with the household are also included in the group of tong kwa. Tong is therefore a conceptualization of the household as a community whose members are bounded by rights and obligations. We shall see shortly the wider implication of such conceptualization, but first I will introduce the rest of the spacial concepts.

Tigé, which corresponds roughly to the English word "neighbourhood", refers to a section of the village that is more or less demarcated by natural phenomenon (e.g. trees, stones, ditches) or artificial boundaries like roads. Each village is ideally composed of a number of smaller units "tigé" which may coincide with the territories of extended families.(1) But it needs not be because the extended family is not considered a residential group. In practice the tigé includes several households or domestic groups. Members of a tigé are seen as a small community. This view is, of course, more real than theoretical since the members of such a group meet each other daily, creating an effective network for the purposes of mutual help.

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1. A farik (Arabic, cattle camp) which is situated outside the village but belonging to a people from the village is also a part of the village and is equivalent to a tigé. The word tigé itself is correctly translated in Arabic as farik.

The village "hillé" (Arabic, hilla) also refers to the territory and the occupants of the houses built within the territorial limits of the village. The territory of the village usually extends beyond the limits of the houses to include land that is usually exploited by the people of that village. There is no demarcation for such territory but it is conventionally understood to be somewhere between any two villages. Each case is therefore to be judged according to its special circumstances.

The hillé kwa (people of the village) are seen as making a community with a sense of belonging to a certain locality. Membership of such a community is based on residence, but people whose parents live in the village, although they are members of other villages, are recognized as associate members. The ahal relationship usually has the function of linking together people from different village communities.

Buro is a very flexible term that can be applied to any convenient locality.[1] A cluster of villages may be distinguished as a buro. A chiefdom is buro and a sub-region is buro. Thus "Furuk buro" and "Miritang buro" are "Dar Furuk" and "Dar Zaghawa" respectively. The central or riverian Sudan is "Sabang buro" (literally, land of the east). Like the rest of Fur words that describe peoples and places, buro is a geographical as well as a social concept.

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1. Buro is the Fur word for the Arabic Dar.

The meaning of the term in any particular instance depends very much on the people involved and the situation in which the reference is made. More often than not, the term is used to identify people with localities and hence with communities. We shall discuss this type of usage in detail in a later chapter. At this connection it is sufficient to say that buro in the sense of a "cluster" of villages sharing some public utilities (e.g. a market, a well, etc.) is the next community level after the village.

For the purposes of illustration, one may think of different residential/territorial units in terms of concentric circles with the household tong in the middle. Each circle appears to be concerned with certain functions (although two adjacent circles can have similar functions).

There are some territorial units which are mainly the formulation of political relationships. Each village, for example, has a head called shaikh. A group of villages (twenty or more) constitute an omodiya whose head omda is called melik (Arabic) or sagal (Fur). The sagal theoretically functions under the Maghdūm and previously under the Takanawi.[1] Membership in one of these administrative units is based on political loyalty. Thus somebody can be a member of a village without following the resident shaikh.

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1. The Takanawi (literally, left arm of the Sultan) was overlord of the north, but in the early 19th century Sultan Mohammad al-Fadl appointed a Maghdum (commissioner) who took over the powers of the Takanawi. The territory of their influence included Dar Zaghawa as well as Tunjur and Fur areas.

The function of the shaikh is to collect taxes from those who are on his list. His followers can be distributed in any number of villages. In some small villages there are no resident shaikhs because the people are enlisted with the shaikhs of adjacent villages. The omodiya operates in the same way as the shaikhship. There is no rule for individual citizens to follow a certain omda but informal rules operate to prevent a total imbalance between different omodiyas from taking place. Examples of whole villages which lie in one omodiya while its members follow a different omda are numerous. Special arrangements are made in such cases to compensate the omda on whose land the village is built (provided that the people of the village cultivate in his territory as well).[1]

It is important to note that the village shaikhship differs from that of omodiya with respect to territory. As we have seen, the shaikh does not control a certain territory but the people who are on his tax-list. On the other hand, omodiyas have fixed boundaries that are documented by the district officials. Disputes over boundaries occasionally take place. In such cases they are settled through special tribunals appointed by the District Commissioner. It usually includes heads of uninvolved chiefdoms, the head of the police, the district judge and the Maghdum or his representative (before the abolition of the office).

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1. A good example is the village of Namara which is located in the southwestern corner of Dar Sueini. The people follow Dar Tuar and cultivate in Dar Furnung. They give dues to the chief of Furnung.

To conclude this section a brief remark on the interplay between kinship rules and rules of residence should be made. Kinship rules regulate descent and initiate the formation of groups that are defined in terms of "nearness" and unified through the exchange of rights and duties. These are mainly the extended family and the ahal. Rules of residence on the other hand allow people from different descent groups to form communities of people who mutually help each other on the basis of common interests and residence.

The interplay between the two factors, that of kinship and residence, is probably the nexus of Fur social organization.

Forms of Economic Activities

It is perhaps more useful if we deal with various aspects of the material life of the Fur under separate sub-headings.

Land (ardiya)

Theoretically speaking all land in Sudan is supposed to be owned by the government. In practice, traditional rules are still applied over the majority of 'tribal' lands in rural Sudan. In Darfur, Keira sultans used to grant people rights over land after it had been carved into estates. The practice was started by Sultan Musa, second historical sultan who ruled towards the end of the seventeenth century. Land was distributed to provincial chiefs,

army leaders and notables as a form of administrative estate system. Other categories of land owners include faqihs (religious men), merchants and members of the Keira clan.(1)

O'Fahey distinguishes between land given to the first group as hakura simple and land alloted to the second group as hakurat al-Jah, "estate of privilege".(2) In the absence of a money economy the granting of land seemed to have been the appropriate way of rewarding people for whatever service they do to the state. The idea was to enable the estate holder to obtain revenues from the people working on the land. Such revenues collectively called al-subul al-adiyya (the customary taxes) include hamil, "the proceeds from the sale of stray animals", diyafa, "hospitality", hukm, "fees and fines from rendering justice", and dam (blood) a share of the blood-money paid to the deceased's or injured's family, In few cases of estates given as "privilege", transfer of rights to take al-ahkām al-shariyya might have been given. These are mainly zakat and fitr (endowments) which were traditionally taken only by the sultan.

The discussion of land-law, structure of estates and the evolution of local groups associated with them is a subject that needs an investigation of its own. At present

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1. Mayram Um Dirays, a royal woman, was given half of Dar Furuk as a hakura (estate) by Sultan Hussein.
2. Over 300 land granting letters have been discovered now; O'Fahey has photographed the majority of them.

we can only give a general picture. O'Fahey has summarized that in the following statement:

> Within the present corpus of the charters, there appears to be an evolution in theory and in practice from earlier passive rights of immunity towards a notion of an estate, iqta or hakura, that is a delimited area of land or rights over or held on behalf of a defined group. (O'Fahey 1977:8)

All three forms of estate rights survived until the last days of the sultanate. Its vestiges still exist today and not surprisingly influence the structure of local communities. However, it should be made clear that the hakura system did not evolve into a feudal system characterized by profiteering. Usually each hakura was divided into smaller units called fas (axe).

These were given to heads of families who settled on the land and cultivated. Thus the head of the family became sid al-fas (the owner of the axe) whose responsibility was to collect dues from the farmers. Moreover he was entrusted with the rights of distributing farms and village sites to new settlers. As the population size is variable, people living on such units did not always constitute one descent group. But communities evolved over such land with one family as its centre.

When the Keira sultanate was over the elite lost most of its privileges and many of them lost control over their land. The asyad al-fas became the only people who administer land affairs in co-operation with the chiefs. The former gave the latter a small portion of the

dues they collect (now called ushoor). Furthermore, the asyad al-fas do not have the right to take away land which is still under use. It is only when the user leaves it unused for more than three years that the owner can redistribute it. Today the payment of ushoor is optional and landowners receive it as a form of traditional gift rather than as "rights" they are entitled to.

As Barth has indicated for the Jebel Marra area (Barth 1967b)land owning families have usufruct rights only over their land. This is generally true all over Darfur. Pastures on the other hand have never been subjected to land ownership. The question of scarcity of land was never a problem in Darfur because the region has always been underpopulated. If somebody fails to get a farming-land in the village where he stays, he can move to another village or start one of his own where he will later be joined by others.(1) Land can also be sub-let to relatives or inherited from one's parents. In short, every Fur adult is capable of finding a farm-land. Actually everybody is entitled to a piece of land and the community will help him get one.

Labour

The primary source of labour for doing any work is one's own labour. The economy is still a simple one, with minimum specialization in things like pottery or leather-

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1. The village of Tenferé at the border between Sueini and Furuk was first started as a farm house by one family from Nawra (southwest corner of Sueini) in the sixties.

craft. Everybody is capable of producing his own food by applying his labour on land. Even chiefs and shaikhs are no exception to the rule. Although standard money is in use among the Fur, it cannot be converted into labour because, in Barth's expression, they belong to different "spheres" of the economy.

The main division of labour is that existing between members of a household. The woman cooks meals, brews beer, brings up the children and helps in looking after the animals. A child from the age of seven may help his mother by looking after the animals or guarding her farm. The man is responsible for buying clothes for members of his family, construction of huts and fences, digging of the well, and importing grain in times of need. If anything should require the co-operation of more than one person, members of the household are readily available for it.

People may also mobilize the labour of their relatives from the category of ahal. This effectively means that only the ahal who live near each other can provide mutual support for purposes of labour. Outside the group of ahal a Fur may also mobilize the labour of his neighbours and village folk. The scale and amount of labour mobilized in this way depends on the job of work to be done, the reciprocal obligations the particular person has in the

community and his ability to provide food for the attendents to his work party (tawisé).[1]

The most common situations for calling work parties is during the weeding stage in the rainy season, harvesting, house-building, and digging of wells in dry-river beds during the hot dry season.

Organization of production

Fur women have their own separate farms of which they are solely responsible.[2] Men have their own farms as well. This relative independence of the spouses in organizing production has led some writers (chiefly Barth and ~~Halaand~~ Haaland) to assume that each adult individual represents an economic unit among the Fur. Given the local variations between different Fur communities, one can agree with them that the individual represents the basic production unit. This is largely true for families that do not (or have not) invested in animal husbandry. Every adult is able to cultivate his plot either by himself or with the aid of work parties. Young children usually go away to Quranic schools or look after the animals of the household.

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1. I disagree with Barth (1967a) and ~~Halaand~~ Haaland (1969) in their assertion that labour is exchanged for beer. My understanding is that beer, like other food items, is a reward to the work-party in the same way as it is a reward for an entertainment party. But the primary items exchanged in this case are the labour of the host and the labour of the guests.
2. They grow dukhn (bullrush millet) which is the staple crop. They also grow tomatoes and okra which are dried and sold in the market as cash-crops. Nearly all the dukhn and part of the cash-crops are consumed within the household.

As the question of economic units involves production as well as consumption, it should not go without saying that the Fur household is one consumption unit. This statement needs further qualification as there are three types of households. The first type is composed of a man and his wife with unmarried sons and daughters plus the newly married couple (one of whom is an original member of the household). Young couples usually spend two years on the average with the bride's family. During this period (which may extend up to five years) they are not allowed to have a kitchen of their own. Although each of them may work in his/her own farm their production is pooled into the household property. When they have their first child they will ceremonially be given their own kitchen("allanga") to start their own consumption unit. This is the second type of household, from a consumption point of view. The third type of household is the uterine household which is part of a compound family. Polygamy is common (most men have two wives). Each wife and her children compose a separate consumption unit. Sometimes uterine households of the same compound family may live in different villages and the husband has to commute between them.

It is therefore clear from the above discussion that the opinion that each adult Fur is a separate economic unit is a misrepresentation of the reality. Instead, I propose that discussion of the Fur economic system should be based on the consideration of production as well as consumption patterns.

Now a word should be said about investment outlets for successful farmers. The prohibition of mobilizing labour by cash payment has already been mentioned. It remains to add that other forms of investment in the agricultural sector are also not possible. Land is free and the question of machinery is unthinkable for that type of environment (mainly in Jebel Si and north).[1] Traditionally the Fur have three ways of storing their wealth. One way is to put their money (in coinage form) in pots and bury them in the ground as a safe method of keeping one's wealth. This method was mainly used by old folk.

Another channel for investment is to buy animals (camels, cattle or sheep) usually at the risk of losing them but with the prospect of increasing its number. The third option is a recent one and is usually open for young men with some education (primary). They can become petty traders and supply villagers with manufactured goods brought from the nearest town. They also take their goods to the weekly markets on donkey or camel back. Since the majority of people do not obtain enough cash to invest in animal husbandry or trading the inevitable conclusion is that the Fur economy is a subsistence one.

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1. The FAO agency of the UN has started experiment of modernizing Fur economy in Jebel Marra and Western zone since the sixties. The plan does not include Fur areas north of Jebel Marra.

Animal Husbandry

Livestock acquisition is relatively new among the Fur (compared with Zaghawa). In Jebel Si, some living informants could remember the time when horses, camels and donkeys were owned only by notables in the community. Cows, goats and sheep were equally rare. It is improbable that the first introduction of animals into these areas were as late as the beginning of this century, but the situation can be seen as a re-emergence of livestock after the great famines of the last century. Wars also played a considerable part in reducing the number of animals in the whole of Darfur.(1)

The Fur today keep or own different types of animals from camels to chickens. The different uses of animals are shown in Table 1 (next page). However, one should warn against any impression of a postoralist society because the Fur own only small amounts of animals compared with other groups (e.g. Zaghawa). Cattle and goats are usually kept in the village. The scarcity of water and shortage of pasture forces some people with large herds to take their animals to a dry-season camp in the wadi beds. The people of Furnung and Furuk, for example, take their animals to spend the dry season in Funu and Serief where there is a plenty of pasture.

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1. Informants from Kutum and Bora (Jebel Si) told me that the dervishes of the Mahdist commander in Darfur, Othman Jano, used to rob villages and kill or take away any animal they could find.

Table 1. Animals kept by the Fur, their uses and forms of management

Animal	Uses	Forms of Management	Notes
Camels	transport, investment, bridewealth	he-camels kept in villages, she-camels entrusted to Arab friends	used in bride-wealth only as supplement
Cattle	dairy products consumed; investment; bridewealth payment; sacrificial animals	kept in villages and occasionally taken to dry season camps	the primary unit for bridewealth payment
Goats	milk, skin (for carrying water), investment	kept in villages	goats are the easiest form of investment; it is a poor family's concern.
Sheep	investment	entrusted to Zaghawa friends	some people keep them in villages with goats
Donkeys	transport (especially water)	kept in villages	essential for every family
Chicken	fowl, especially for guests	kept within homesteads	usually owned by women and children

A constant problem for livestock owners is the difficulty of finding water and pasture in the same place. Furthermore the Fur are inclined to leave the job of looking after animals for young boys and girls unless it is absolutely necessary for them to interfere. As for camels and sheep, the former are traditionally entrusted to Arab friends while the latter are entrusted to Zaghawa friends. The herder benefits from the milk and wool while the owner gets the benefit of increasing his animals with the least effort. This strategy is not always successful because there are the risks of loss, deception, theft or simply over-herding.

Hæland has analysed the effect of strategic choices taken by successful Fur farmers which has resulted in considerable cases of Fur nomadization on the Fur/Baggara front in southern Darfur. He concluded that

> These careers represent the accumulated result of strategic choice taken with reference to value management. The problem for the choices are the culturally defined goals that one wants to realize (e.g. preference for special consumption pattern, style of life, prestige) and the institutional and ecological factors. (Haaland 1972:158)

One obvious result of the above-mentioned exercise of strategic choices is the development of a mixed economy. This is already taking place among the Fur of the north. In 1973, the writer and Haaland visited a camp of Fur camel herders on the plains between Jebel Si and Furnung. Since then more Fur camel camps have come into existence,

as I was recently told by informants. Yet, this does not seem to alter the Fur preference (ideology) to subsistence cultivation and village life. As Haaland has noticed,

> the current nomadisation process thus does not lead to the emergence of a nomadic Fur section but to the inclusion of the nomadised Fur into the adjoining ethnic category. (Haaland 1972:165)

The full implication of the above statement will have to be considered later in regard to the discussion of "identity switches" on the Fur/Zaghawa frontier.

Markets

A few words should, perhaps, be said about markets since they are important elements in the economic regime. Local markets are mobile and rotational, i.e. there are no permanent buildings on the market place. People meet under trees or thatched roofs once or twice a week to exchange agricultural produce, dairy products and to purchase manufactured goods. There is a series of markets spreading all over the region, each held in a different day of the week. The villagers go to these markets selectively according to their needs. These markets have additional functions as meeting places where social issues are discussed. It also provides a situation for inter-ethnic relations. The display of ethnic symbols is one way of communicating people's interests in their groups. This will be discussed in more detail in the last chapter.

The Fur as an Ethnic Group

It is clear from the above discussion of the origin of the Fur that a firm conclusion is far from possible, at least not with the kind of evidence presented by MacMichael and Arkell. Here I intend to show my position regarding their views and to make a suggestion about how the question might be tackled.

MacMichael's approach is based on the assumption that ethnic groups or "tribes" are primarily biological categories. He set himself to discover the racial origin of the Fur people. When faced by the evidence of a multi-ethnic society (various Fur claiming different origins) he devised a method of grading the people into pure and mixed. Furthermore his dubious concern with "race" led him to assume a "natural inferiority" of the original Fur and to attribute the rise of the Keira sultanate to the ingenious of the "Arab" element who intermarried with the indigenous people.

However, one important conclusion to be drawn from MacMichael's evidence is that the Fur, and for that matter the rest of Darfurian groups, are not a biologically homogeneous group. This is even more true about the Fur of Inga, Furnung, Furuk and those living within Dar Sueini. Although they are generally labelled "Fur" and many of them accept this identification, they still claim origin from other groups (e.g. Arab, Tunjur). If asked about this apparently contradictory information, they might reply that Tunjur are Fur or that "Fur" refers to a language and not to an ethnic group.

Not satisfied with MacMichael's evidence, Arkell pursues a linguistic approach based on the assumption that a speech community equals an ethnic group. He traces the origins of the words "Fur" and "Kora" in a characteristically speculative manner and reaches a conclusion about the origin of the Fur which is similar to MacMichael's.

The difficulty with this approach does not lie only in its speculative character but also in the assumption on which it is based, mainly that a speech community represents a "cult unit". In fact, observers have noticed the existence of three Fur dialects. The Fur of the north (with whom we have mainly been concerned) speak a dialect that includes many Arabic words in it. Moreover, they have access to two other languages, Arabic and Zaghawa. Fur and Arabic are used by everybody in the community while Zaghawa is used by few people in limited situations.

The second dialect is that spoken by the people of Jebel Si. The people of Jebel Marra and western lowlanders speak yet a third dialect of the Fur language. Generally speaking, mountain dwellers speak less Arabic than those living on the plains.

The important question to be asked now is whether the people in question represent a "group" in any sense of the word. As a social anthropologist, I am interested in social relations and not in biological typologies. We know that throughout the history of Darfur the people now referred to as Fur never came under a single administrative

unit. Northern Darfur was ruled by the Takangawi (and later the Magdum) who had other "tribes" under his control besides the Fur. Jebel Marra used to be the Sultan's own hakura. The western lowlands were ruled by Abu Demangawi. What all this leads to is that there has never been any political unity between all Fur communities in modern times.

The Fur people have no ritual unity either. There may be common themes of ritual ceremonial but there are great variations in their conduct. One would even say that there are more similarities in production rituals between the Fur of Furuk and their Tunjur neighbours than there are between themselves and the people of Jebel Marra.

With regard to the name of the group itself we are faced with two important considerations. First, the application of the name Fur by outsiders does not coincide with the use of the people it is supposed to label. Secondly, various communities that call themselves Fur use the word to refer to different orders of social groupings. While some people may consider it a reference to their genealogical relations, others may consider it a reference to their mother tongue.

What all this leads to is the conclusion that there is no single, homogeneous group called "Fur". One may ask whether or not a common culture, language and close geographical proximity are enough to make a certain population of people a "group". That is true, but only

in relation to outsiders. Moreover, this sense of a group is different from that adopted by MacMichael and Arkell. The Fur of today, as I see them, represent an "ethnic group" in relation to other groups in the region not because they are internally unified but because of a common history, similar way of life and a current interest in being identified as such. I would like to stress that the word group is used here in the sense of "category" and not to indicate a political independent community. I propose to leave the argument at this stage for the time being and to return to it in the last chapter.

CHAPTER IV

THE ZAGHAWA

Origin, Location and Traditional History

Tubiana and Tubiana open the first chapter of their book with the following statement:

> The Arabs give the name Zaghawa to an Africa population which calls itself (bèrí) and lives on the border of the Chad and Sudan Republics, around latitude 15°N and longitude 21°-25°E. The same Arabs use the name Bideyat for another African people that live around latitude 17°-18°N who similarly call themselves /bèrí/. This is no coincidence since, besides a common language and culture, close economic ties together with many other features characterize both groups which in fact form one and the same population. (Tubiana and Tubiana 1977:1)

The Zaghawa of the Sudan occupy the whole of northern Darfur with the exception of the eastern border with Kordofan which is occupied by the Meidob.[1] Dar al-Rih (land of the winds)[2], also named after the Zaghawa (Dar Zaghawa), forms a part of the Sahelian zone that runs across Darfur east and west. It has low rainfall (ranging between 150 mm and 300 mm in its southern edges), though the present decade has been characterized by drought, the worst of which occurred in the period 1969-73. This resulted in a wide dispersal of Zaghawa and Bideyat

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1. Some Zaghawa live in Kagmar in Kordofan. They are arabicised and completely cut off from the main group.

2. It also refers to the direction: North.

populations over the rest of the Sudan. The situation is made even worse by the operation of desertification factors.

Administratively, the Zaghawa are found in four chiefdoms which they solely occupy. These chiefdoms are, from west to east, Kobé, Gala, Tuar and Artag. The northern parts of Sueini and Beiri chiefdoms are also occupied by Zaghawa. Tubiana and Tubiana estimated the total number of Darfur Zaghawa to have been about 255,000 persons in 1970. They estimated the Bideyat to be about 15,000 persons. Both Zaghawa and Bideyat recognize one general name for themselves, Beri. Internally, though, they recognize different names based on speech communities.

Bideyat : Toba
Kobé : Kobara
Zaghawa : Wagi

This classification actually corresponds to the geographical distribution of the component groups of Beri. In the present study, we are mainly concerned with the third group, "Wagi". Reference to them will be under the name Zaghawa hereafter.

Turning back to the question of origin, we may start by giving MacMichael's view. Although he does not give an elaborate hypothesis on who the Zaghawa are and how they came to their present country, he resorts to speculation and asserts that the Zaghawa are a mixture of Hamatic Tibbu and Negroes. As mentioned earlier he considers the Bideyat to be an "exaggerated" form of

Zaghawa. They came to Darfur from North Africa, he concluded from the writings by Arab geographers.

Our second source of information on the origin of the Beri is the articles written by Arkell in "Sudan Notes and Records". Attracted by the striking similarity between Berber alphabet and animal brands still in use in Darfur, Arkell sets to establish his theory that this resemblance must be a consequence of Berber domination of Darfur in the past.(1) Although similar animal brands are used by various "tribes" in the region, he sought the Berber connection through the groups who had a "ruling" tradition. Arkell suggests that the Zaghawa Mirra, who were the rulers of Dar Kobé before the present ruling clan, were of Daju origin. Using the evidence of animal brands to validate this suggestion, he states:

> If the Daju connection is thereby sufficiently established, the support given by the distribution of this brand to the theory that the domination of Dar Zaghawa by the Mirra represents a Daju domination is of historical importance.
> (Arkell S.N.R. vol. 32 part 2 1951:223)

Furthermore, Arkell argues that the square used in some of the brands seems to be the older form, being characteristic of the Daju, Tunjur, and Mima.(2) He concludes,

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1. The brands are + (Berber T) and Λ or ⌐¬ (Berber D) added to the base of each ear (of the animal).
2. The Mima are thought to have been living in Dar Tuar and most of Wagi country before the Zaghawa took over from them. They now live in the Qoz zone.

> ...all according to tradition early rulers in Darfur, and all probably of Berber origin. (Arkell, op. cit.:220)

Put in a nutshell Arkell's argument is this: since the comparison of the animal brands show a connection between different Zaghawa clans and Daju, Tunjur and Mima, and since these in turn are probably of Berber origin because of the resemblance between their brands that represent royalty and the Berber alphabet (also symbol of royalty), the Zaghawa must also be of Berber origin.

This argument is not at all convincing mainly because the usage of Berber alphabet in Darfur has not been supported by any other linguistic, archeological or historical evidence and even if his computations of Berber influence on Darfur are generally true, the resemblances might have resulted from culture contact rather than from biological origins or political domination. Arkell uses another linguistic argument to prove the Berber connection. He traces the etymology of the word Zaghawa (evidently referring to all Beri people) with evidence from reports by medieval Arab writers (Ibn Said , Abu al-Fida, Ibn Khaldun, Idrisi and al-Muhallabi) from which he concludes that,

> The name Zaghawa seems to be an arabicised form of a Berber word meaning "the red people", i.e. presumably one of the branches of the Berbers themselves as distinct from the negroes. (Arkell, S.N.R., vol. 33, part 2, 1952:269)

Again the difficulty with this argument lies in the fact that using etymological evidence to prove racial origin is hard to take.

This difficulty is demonstrated by Arkell's answer to a controversial claim by the Zaghawa Tuar to a Bornu origin. He explains away this claim by assuming a political domination of Darfur by Bornu:

> The fact that (23) the brand of Aulad Dowri, one of the three chief sections of the Zaghawa of Dar Tuar who claim Bornu descent, is of similar form (to that of Bedeyat at Kaga of Western Kordofan) points to the fact that they, like all the other inhabitants of Dar Zaghawa, may be Bedeyat in origin; and that their connection with Bornu, whatever it is, may be rather political than physical. (1) (Arkell, S.N.R., vol. 32, part 2, 1951:223)

It is clear that the problem of "ethnic origins" with regard to the Zaghawa is as ambiguous as that of the Fur. The only difference is that there is an agreement among observers and the natives themselves that their forebearers migrated to the country they are now occupying from the north, across the Sahara.

Contrary to MacMichael's and Arkell's theory, the German traveller, Gustav Nachtigal, who visited Darfur in 1874 commented on the origin of the Zaghawa with a different perspective,

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1. The number (23) here refers to the catalogue number given by the author to the collection of animal brands used in the article from which the quotation is taken.

> The Zaghawa, who are said some centuries ago to have had certain importance beyond Darfur, are not, as Barth and others have supposed, actually a section of the Tubu family, but together with the inhabitants of Ennedi, the Bedeyat and the small Wanya tribe which occupy the little region of Wanyanga on the road leading from Benghazi to Wadai, constitute a single tribal group. (Nachtigal 197 :349)

The north African connection has been confirmed by all subsequent writers. Only the details of their migration remains to be filled by archeological research.

The people of Dar Zaghawa, however, have conflicting version of their origin and history. Each clan or group of clans emphasize their own separate identity in the past. The full implication of this will be discussed in the final section of the present chapter. The crude picture of such ancestral claims looks like this:

The Kobé are the original Zaghawa group.

Dar Gala clans are largely Bideyat in origin.

Dar Tuar clans are largely Bornu in origin.

Dar Artaj clans are originally Arab.

The Nikiri clan in Anka is Misairiya Arab in origin.

The Biriyara clan of Bideyat is Tunjur in origin.

Descent groups and local communities

The Zaghawa social structure differs considerably from the Fur one in relation to co-operation between descent groups. Although like the Fur they say that patrilineal kin are "bones" and matrilineal kin are "flesh",

the Zaghawa actually mean it. Descent rules among them are patrilineal. Each individual is a member of his father's group and members of this group are given priority in mutual co-operation.

The largest descent group to which an individual belongs is the clan. Warrāi, a corrupted form of the Fur Urré, is used to denote such a group which is also referred to by the Arabic word Khashim beit (literally, door of the house). For the sake of consistency, let us begin with the smallest units first.

The smallest descent group among the Zaghawa is the extended family. Membership in this group is recognized on the basis of patrilineal descent and marriage (for wives of the male members). The extended family is also a household or a domestic group in the sense that its members reside in the same place and have shared responsibilities towards each other.

Unlike the Fur household, the Zaghawa counterpart is a joint production and consumption unit. The group owns a joint flock of sheep or goats and herds of cattle and camels. Although the production of millet may sometimes be organized in each nucelar family separately, its consumption is communal. In practice, though, not every individual is able to look after a farm plot because some labour is always taken by pastoralism. The Zaghawa family depends mainly on its herds because the production of millet is never certain as one local leader put it to me, "We are not worried about rain for cultivation but for the growth

of pastures. If we have good pastures we can import grain from wherever it may be."

Another substantial difference between Fur and Zaghawa extended families is that the latter still conducts inheritance according to custom (and rarely according to the sharia). When the father dies, his property is inherited by his sons to the exclusion of his daughters.

Normally the extended family does not break up after the death of the father (head), but variably continues under the leadership of his oldest son. The joint family livestock will be used by unmarried sons to get married, each in turn according to age priority. By the time the youngest son gets married and the oldest one establishing his own extended family, the factors for breaking the old family increases. The brothers can then divide the remaining animals between them and the developmental cycle starts again. Some families adopt the Sharia law at this stage and give their sisters their share of the remaining property.

The primary rules of marriage are those of exogamy (in relation to villages) and virilocal residence. The effect of this is that brothers stay together and sisters go away after marriage. The cattle brought as a bride-wealth for a girl when she is married is taken by her father and/or brothers.

The next level of grouping is that of a lineage or "durriya" (Arabic, descendants). An ancestral depth of

seven generations is usually recognized for this group, with membership based on patrilineal descent. Such persons are expected to live in the same area. The durriya is a local descent group. Its members support each other in courts or on the occasion of a fight. Members of a durriya are expected to co-operate in grazing strategies (especially in the Jizu).

That is as far as normative rules are concerned but the actual application of these rules differ in each case and individuals adopt varying strategies that safeguard their interests. This is where the village community comes in. The village is regarded as a community of people who co-operate in general matters and especially that of security. If somebody's animals are stolen, as often happens, the village people are expected to form an expedition to chase the thieves and get the animals back. As firearms are popular in Dar Zaghawa this can be a very serious responsibility. However members of one's lineage are expected to spearhead such an expedition.

This means that the effectiveness of the durriya depends on the conditions of residence of the members. Again, as with the Fur local groups, rules of kinship have to be combined with rules of residence. Although assimilation is difficult among the Zaghawa, a stranger can establish himself in a local group by marrying into it and observing the rules of communal co-operation.

Going back to Zaghawa clans, it is fair to say that they are not strictly descent groups. Theoretically

speaking they are expected to be patrilineal groups having a common ancestor (about 12 generations deep). The clan is unified through the symbolic usage of animal brands.

To put it a different way, the unity of the clan members is communicated through the use of the brand (which may be considered as an emblem) on the animals of clan members. Some people put the brand of their mothers' clan as well, but in this case it is put in a different area of the animal's body. For practical purposes, when a branded animal is stolen or goes astray the people who come across it can identify it and keep it until its owner arrives. In the case of a stolen animal, clan members can challenge the thief.

As a normative rule, thieves do not steal the animals of their clan members. This security aspect of clan membership is very important in a pastoral society where animal stealing is common. Furthermore, the clan is a diya-paying group (blood-money). When a homicide case is settled, members of the murderer's clan co-operate in paying the blood-money.(1)

One last note about Zaghawa clans is that they are not territorial units. The Awlad Degain clan, for example, has members almost everywhere in Dar Zaghawa. In this respect they are not different from Fur clans.

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1. Community members from other clans may also pay although they are not regarded as legal parties in the dispute. When a homicide takes place within a clan, groups of lower order (lineages) are mobilized as legal parties.

Concepts and Processes Relating to Residence and Territory

The Zaghawa recognize the spacial distribution of social groups in the following way:

bé : house

guri : camp

gelli : village

dar : country

The word bé refers to the hut or groups of huts inhabited by a household as well as to its location. Members of the household are identified with their bé . For all practical purposes, the household may be seen as a residential unit whose members support each other as a corporate group. The mutual support is not largely affected if a member changes his residence.

The factor of residence, however, affects the life of the group in two ways. First, when a female member is married the groom is expected to do services to the household for a considerable period before he is allowed to establish his own household or join his household of origin. A wealthy family with less male labour force will try its best to make in-laws stay with them. This works well especially when the two are linked through matrilineal descent. The second way in which residence affects the household is through the communal co-operation that exists between villagers. Other villagers may be a part of the same durriya but this is not always the case.

Communal spirit is all too important for the function of the household as a residential unit. This brings us to the next unit.

Guri is a camp established for the purposes of husbandry (for looking after sheep, camels, cattle). The camp usually includes related households of the order of lineages. The composition of the camp usually reflects the composition in the village of origin (thus corresponding to the Fur tigé). A camp is essentially a grazing unit, though the herds and flocks are not reared as one unit. Nevertheless it is a unit in the sense that they co-ordinate their grazing strategies and routes of migration and most importantly as a defense unit against any possible stealing attempts. Because pastoralism is the most important economic activity in the area, political alliances usually stem from or result in joint camps between households. To put it differently it is the arena in which the efficiency of an alliance is put to the test.

On the other hand, the village still functions as the focal point of Zaghawa society though to a lesser extent than its Fur counterpart. An average Zaghawa village may be composed of twenty households, while an average Fur village comprises about fifty households.[1] A gelli, in Zaghawa, refers to the village as a locality as well as the community of people inhabiting it. Villages are usually dominated by members of one clan (often belonging

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1. The village of Mangoré in Furnung has about 250 households.

to the same lineage, durriya). As the villages are smaller the probability of the households being related by descent is higher. Indeed, some villages are composed of one camp-unit, guri.

One can therefore say that in Dar Zaghawa there is a higher coincidence between descent groups and local communities. This is understandably logical for a pastoral society with high risk of theft and loss of animals. Related persons can provide better defence services to each other especially in dangerous situations. For this reason the Zaghawa express feuds and fights in kinship terms.

Another consideration of the village that is worth mentioning here is the function of exogamy. In the past localized lineages were exogamous groups. This is still common in some places, especially in the extreme north. In the majority of the communities though the preferential marriage of father's brother's daughter has been adopted as a result of Islamization. Still it is more appealing to the Zaghawa if the two families live in different villages.

Larger territorial units are called dar (Arabic, country). This applies to wards or clusters of villages, chiefdoms and the whole territory occupied by the Zaghawa. They all show different levels of identification with territories to which an individual belongs. The actual reference to these territories depends on the varying situations in which the individual finds himself plus the relative status of other individuals in the same situation.

The administrative and political functions of these units are typical to that of the Fur (mainly because of similar experience with a centralized state). Owing to the pastoral system of the Zaghawa, people frequently exploit territories that do not belong to their groups (i.e. they are not identified with these territories). This makes it necessary for the Zaghawi to establish friendship relations with various people in the areas which he visits.

Since the Zaghawa always look south in years of low rainfall, it is understandable why many of them have established friendships with Fur villagers. In many cases this led to the total assimilation of some Zaghawa households in Fur areas.(1) This trend is, of course, a part of a widespread pastoral strategy the aim of which is to enable the household to rebuild its herd.

To summarize, we may say that Zaghawa households show two distinct patterns of communal co-operation. At the level of guri and gelli the association is higher between residence and descent (as mentioned earlier). Manipulation of kinship rules is therefore the best strategy for mobilizing support of any kind (where a stranger is assimilated he is given a kinship status). At the level of territorial units (ward, chiefdom, country) and where association with descent groups is lacking, the household depends on the mobilization of support through alliances.(2)

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1. For example in Furuk and Fatta-Barno.
2. Presumably descent groups in the past occupied whole territories (wards). During the Keira rule these were dissolved and chiefdoms were formed. An informant from Kurbia (Dar Tuar) told me that in the past descent groups of the order of lineages and clans used to have exclusive territories but this is no longer the case.

Forms of Economic Activities

Once again it will make our picture of Zaghawa society easy to grasp if we deal with their material life under sub-headings. This will also provide a comparison with our picture of Fur society.

Land

The general view of land use and granting of rights over land under the Keira rule is true only in a limited sense about the northernmost area of the region. Despite the discovery of some land documents from Dar Sueini that parallels the practice discussed in relation to Fur areas, one gets the impression that the majority of Zaghawa land was not actually divided as hawakir. Without a close study of this subject, it is too early to judge with certainty. However one can speculate on why hawakir could be expected to have had less importance in Dar Zaghawa. There appear to have been three reasons:

1) The climate in northern Darfur is not favourable for the production of agricultural surplus. The people always need to supplement their staple by gathering wild cereals and importing millet from the south. As mentioned earlier, the main aim of granting land is for a notable to be able to feed an army of followers from the dues collected from peasants. It is, therefore, perfectly right not to expect the notables to be attracted to such an inhospitable zone.

2) Dar Zaghawa is far from the centre of political influence.

3) The Zaghawa practise cultivation only as a part-time occupation. They are always attracted to pastoralism. One obvious difficulty of administering livestock breeders by granting rights over land is that the population is relatively mobile. When too much pressure is put on them, pastoralists do tend to migrate.(1)

Although land-owning families or people with usufruct rights over land are not much in evidence here, there are special types of farms that are highly valued and hence inherited patrilineally. This is what the Zaghawa call arsho which means an alluvial plain run over by a seasonal stream wadi. The sub-stratum of such a plain has the characteristic of keeping humidity for a long period, thus enabling cultivation to grow and ripen even when the rains stop. Cultivation on such land is less risky than otherwise expected. Its main disadvantage, on the other hand, is that it requires a lot of rain to make these wadis flow and flood. Even ~~though~~ So, feuds over arsho land have resulted in deaths in the past.

The primary importance of land in this semi-desert area, it should be emphasized, is to provide grazing for animals on which the people largely depend for their

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1. A group of Zaghawa, Awlad Dawré, led by their leader Abayd, fled to Kajmar in northern Kordofan as a result of Keira aggression during the reign of Sultan Ahmed Bukr.

livelihood. Grazing land is communal and theoretically open to everyone who can afford to have animals. With the exception of village surroundings and land walled with tree branches for cultivation purposes, the only rights on grazing is that of first come. In addition to the local people, Arab camel owners used to roam in northern Darfur since the days of the sultanate. The extreme north eastern corner of Darfur is practically no-man's land where pastoral groups from Kordofan and Darfur take their camels and sheep to graze the "Jizu" during winter months (November to February).

One last comment on land in Dar Zaghawa is that it is rapidly changing into desert today. Whole forests have dried up and soil is constantly eroded and swept away by the winds to form sand-dunes that destroy pastures. Thousands of people have deserted their villages to settle in central and southern Darfur. Plans for resettling the Zaghawa in south-western Darfur were started in the mid-1970's but resulted in failure because of the unsuitability of the area for the Zaghawa's activities, but experts still believe that unless cultivation is completely stopped and animal population reduced there is no hope of restoring the capacity of the land.

Labour

The primary source of labour is the household. The division of labour (according to sex and age) is crucial because the Zaghawa houshold is involved in three different economic activities: animal husbandry, cultivation of

millet and hunting/gathering. Traditionally women perform the task of gathering wild cereals which they use as supplementary to their diet of milk and millet porridge. Women also provide the major labour-force in agricultural activities. They sow, weed and harvest (when conditions permit).

Men effectively engage in clearing bushes and building walls out of tree branches in order to protect the plants from stray animals. In the past, before the Zaghawa adopted cultivation, men were not involved in the gathering of food. Instead, they were involved in hunting which they still do by the use of rifles.[1] The Tubianas have notice this transformation:

> The tendency to give up wild grain gathering for cultivation wherever the conditions make it possible is in a sense equivalent to discharging the women of their burden and sharing it with the men who have certain tasks to perform in the field.
> (Tubiana and Tubiana 1977:31)

In the pastoral sector of Zaghawa economy, labour consists primarily of young boys and girls. Boys look after sheep and camels while girls look after cattle and goats, but the division is not rigid here and every household deals with the situation according to its resources. Those who do not have enough household labour can hire herdsmen to look after their animals. These are usually

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1. Only the blacksmiths, a stigmatized cast, practise hunting as a profession, using traditional methods or local-made rifles.

young boys from relatively poor families in the community who are anxious to rebuild their herds to enable themselves to marry. They are paid in kind (depending on the kind of animals involved).

In this respect then the Zaghawa economy looks more flexible, compared with the Fur situation, because of the exchangability of labour for livestock which can be turned into cash. Labour may also be mobilized on communal basis for activities such as house-building, digging of wells or building a kraal for the vaccination of animals. Compared with the Fur, work parties in Dar Zaghawa are less frequent and almost absent in agricultural activities. This is because the Zaghawa tend to rely on kinsmen for help in daily activities.

Organization of Production

The household, which usually coincides with the extended family, is the economic unit among the Zaghawa. Production is achieved through a traditional division of labour as mentioned above. There are other two forms of economic activities which have not been mentioned yet and both of them are related to migratory labour. Traditionally Zaghawa women from poor households go to work in millet fields in the central part of Darfur during the harvest period (November-February). This seasonal migration is called "shibia" in Zaghawa. The women are paid in kind (grain). After they finish they send a message to their households so that men come with camels to take the grain and accompany them home. The other

source of income outside Zaghawa country is for young men to migrate to urban centres in Sudan or Libya where they obtain money and send it home.

The Zaghawa household acts also as one consumption unit. Resources are "pooled" and consumed collectively. It is clear that the economic performance of Zaghawa domestic groups refelcts a rational exploitation of resources. In the past there was no way to employ surplus labour (husbandry takes only a small proportion).[1] Uninterested as they are in cultivation, the Zaghawa had a reputation for laziness. In defense of the Zaghawa economic system and allocation of labour Tubiana and Tubiana write:

> European observers have always blamed the /beri/ for their idleness, when they ought rather to have emphasized their strong awareness of economic realities. For in this region where even drought is nomadic, the cultivation of bulrush millet is a gamble verging on the absurd. The statistical probability of reaping as much as was originally sown is almost nil....The attitude of the /beri/ with regard to agriculture is thus perfectly sensible.
> (Tubiana and Tubiana 1977:6)

As regards investment, any surplus is usually re-cycled in the pastoral sector of the economy. But recently some enlightened Zaghawa engaged in trading activities in urban centres and across the border with Chad, Libya and Egypt. Even this category of Zaghawa keep

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1. Livestock stealing (especially camels) for which the Zaghawa are renowned may be attributed partially to the factor of surplus labour.

herds and flocks of camels and sheep. This is not a case of a "culture complex" but a manifest of economic realities, for cross-border trade is largely based on the export of animals and import of manufactured goods. The attitude of the Zaghawi towards his animals is thus quite pragmatic.

Animal Husbandry

As all herdsmen do, the Zaghawa always opt at increasing the numbers of their animals. The region of short steppes which they occupy is always short of water supply and pastures and the fact that other pastoral groups share natural resources with the Zaghawa sometime during the year only adds to this problem. Faced with this reality the Zaghawa try to employ their resources in as rational a way as possible. This resulted in the adoption of transhumance as the most efficient way of exploiting the resources of their environment.

The system may be summarized in terms of two-way movement. When the first rains start herdsmen take their animals to the north where they graze the fresh grass and drink from temporary pools. This applies largely to owners of camels and sheep.(1) By November the herdsmen reach the "Jizu" where their animals graze the winter pastures until February. They then return to Zaghawa country to concentrate near water sources for the rest of the dry season (March-June).

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1. Before the mid-sixties many Zaghawa used to entrust their camels to Arab friends. Due to a series of tribal fights over water sources all the Zaghawa claimed their camels back to manage them by themselves.

Table 2. Animals kept by the Zaghawa, their uses and forms of management

Animal	Use	Forms of Management	Notes
Camels	transport, investment bridewealth	looked after by young boys of the household or by hired boys; long migrations	previously entrusted to Arabs
Cattle	dairy products, investment, bridewealth	mostly females who look after them; short migrations	
Sheep	meat, investment	attended by boys, reared with camels	
Goats	meat, investment	mostly females who look after them; reared together with cattle in short migrations	poor man's investment
Horses	transport, prestige	kept in villages; females graze by themselves during dry season	Zaghawa used to keep many horses
Donkeys	transport (especially water)	kept in the village	essential for every household

Cattle and goats on the other hand do not move too far from the villages during the rainy season and winter, but they are kept away from pastures around permanent water supplies. Incidentally, the members of the household who look after these animals also participate in the cultivation of millet should rainfall be sufficient. In the dry season however they take cattle and goats near to permanent water sources because they have to be watered every other day (sheep and camels endure thirst for a longer period - up to one week).

However, the cycle of movement for both two groups of animals is drastically altered in years of low rainfall. In such cases they are taken southwards as soon as the so-called rainy season ends and they stay there until the first rain is reported in Dar Zaghawa. The last drought has meant that the southward movement became more frequent and for some people it was a chance for permanent stay in the prosperous southern zone. In many cases they have been replaced by the Bideyat who keep few animals and live on the gathering of wild cereals and fruit. To them the Zaghawa country is more prosperous than theirs which is a part of the Sahara itself.

One result of the southern connection of the Zaghawa is the increase of Fur pastoralism. Through the establishment of friendly relationships the Zaghawa have offered to the Fur new chances of investment in livestock, as we have already indicated.[1]

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1. Ecologists think that the agricultural zone will contract southwards as the desert moves to destroy the pastoralist zone. This in effect will mean the substitution of pastoralism for agriculture in the once dominantly agricultural areas. (Professor Mensching, personal communication)

Markets

Zaghawa local markets are characteristically smaller than Fur markets although they basically operate in the same way as these latter ones. They are also fewer in number in relation to the population. One thing that attracts the attention of the stranger in a Zaghawa market place is the absence of livestock on sale, and for that matter the absence of butcheries. I shall illuminate this point later when discussing the system of markets in "Dor".

It is interesting to know that the first markets in Dar Zaghawa were started by petty traders from "Dor" area. The main goods they used to sell were dried vegetables from Jebel Marra in addition to essential manufactured goods like sugar, matches, salt, cloth and soap. Generally speaking markets in this area are less popular than their counterparts in the adjacent area to the south.

The Zaghawa as an Ethnic Group

We have seen at the beginning of this chapter how the historians considered the problem of the Zaghawa as one of racial origin. There is no wonder then that the ambiguities of the early history of the Beri people led another historian to propose the limitation of the word "Zaghawa" to a linguistic usage only. He writes,

> Zaghawa is strictly a linguistic rather than an ethnic term. The language belongs to the Tibbu linguistic group. All Zaghawa speak it, though not all are of Tibbu origin. (Balfour-Paul, 1956:83)

The above quotation amounts to a crude statement about the history of the Beri people which is largely true. The Beri certainly represent a linguistic unit with three speech communities, Bideyat, Kobé and Wagi. Some clans are considered to be "more Beri" than the others (i.e. Kobé) and as such they are probably related to the Tibbu. The rest of them, who are the majority, claim Arab, Tunjur, and Bornu origins. While it is not possible to accept the evidence of these oral traditions at their face value, it is equally invalid to assume that they are totally unfounded.

A better formulation of the problem, from a sociological point of view, would be to treat the Zaghawa as a people who had a joint history of adaptation to ecological and socio-political conditions in the past. At present they are bound as a group through their current interests which makes them distinctive from other groups in the area. A common culture (including language) is the medium through which the historical experience and present interests are communicated between members of the group.

If we look at the usage of the word "Zaghawa" today we find that it has two meanings. First, it refers to members of two speech communities, Kobé and Wagi. As such it serves as a basis of classification using the criterion of language. Second, it is also used as a comprehensive term to describe the inhabitants of north-western Darfur as a people who occupy a certain ecological zone, "dar al-Rih" and practise pastoral transhumance as

their main economic activity. This later usage certainly refers to a society .

However, the two usages do not coincide completely, and it is not necessary that they do so. What is important here is what meaning is used for what purpose and in which situation? The neighbours of the Zaghawa have stereo-typed views about them. For example they are considered as speakers of Zaghawa, live near the desert, livestock breeders and thieves. These ethnocentric views are also shared by some writers (e.g. MacMichael). They should not be judged as true or false but merely as a means of identification of "others". Furthermore, they have accepted this usage themselves by being conscious about it. Thus when I asked an informant at Um-Marahik wells (Dar Artaj) about his group he replied, Zaghawa. Asking him of the division to which he belonged, he replied, Awlad Um-Sireira. On the past history of his clan, my informant said that they were Arabs who came from the north.

Many people, then, prefer to consider the Zaghawa as a tribe or "tribal group". The term "tribe" has been used in social anthropology to denote a political community as it appears in the following quotation by Lucy Mair:

> But anyone who wants to use it as a technical term, and not a term of abuse, should be clear that it simply means an independent political division of a population with a common culture. (Mair, 1964:15)

It may look as if the term "tribe" suits the Zaghawa situation. If we look closer we find that the various

Zaghawa dars are independent of each other as political units. Like the Fur they have never been under a single administration of their own. We also know that these dars have been constructed by central state agencies and not by the Zaghawa themselves as a part of their traditional social structure. This has resulted in the dispersal of clan members into many dars. Thus, as we mentioned earlier, the Awlad Digain are spread in dars of Tuar, Gala, Artaj, Sueini and Beiri. This is no doubt a combination of political and ecological adaptation, i.e. a result of the transhumance system.

A former (British) District Commissioner wrote a comment on the political dispute between the Genigergera clan and the then chief of Dar Gala in a letter to the Darfur District Governor, arguing that the Zaghawa politics are rather "national" than "tribal":

> Their loyalties centre upon a Dar (or nation) which has been carved into a political unit by an individual or group of colonies, usually with close family ties to begin with but by no means retaining the tribal basis of settlement in that colony. These colonies when they feel themselves big enough tend to seek self government, -- especially when a vigorous political party feeling itself superior to the ruling power should occur in any one of them. (1)

Thus the evolution from local lineages to clans, then Dars is achieved through the dissassociation of clans from fixed territories. As such the channels for assimilation

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1. Kutum Council, 1935, File No. NDD/66. B.2, page 101.

or incorporation are open to strangers (even from outside the Zaghawa society). This in part may explain why many Zaghawa claim descent from other groups.

Another possibility is to consider the Zaghawa as an "ethnic group", though this too has its difficulties. One important point is that many of those who use it give it a biological overtone (e.g. Narrol 1964). Accordingly, an ethnic group is thought to be biologically homogeneous or at least there must be such a core. This trend has led to many oversimplifications of the continuous process of population movement. Many such movements and indeed resultant structures are thought of in terms of "race" relations. For sociological reasons, referred to earlier, I do not see the question of race as the major factor in this respect. I therefore see the unity of Zaghawa not in terms of biological origin or a linguistic classification but as the Tubianas have put it:

> But we intend to take into account the fact that these people have had a history of their own, consisting of a series of climatic events, of a gradually acquired technical knowledge, of the development of relations among their own clans and also of their relations with the neighbouring African population. (Tubiana and Tubiana 1977:1)

It is not enough that the past experience should be taken "into account" but I believe that such a "history" plus their present preoccupations should constitute our major concern of a people and that their definition or identification should arise from this complex situation.

It is in this sense that I describe the Zaghawa as an ethnic group. Just like the Fur, the Zaghawa are not a group in the sense of having a single hierarchy of political organization. Their political unity is rather potential than real.

The dichotomy Fur/Zaghawa therefore reflects the complexity of ecological adaptations, experiences of migrations and the present reality of social organization. At this juncture we may leave this discussion to be elaborated later.

CHAPTER V

THE "DOR" BELT

In territorial terms there is no such thing as the "Dor" belt. As such, the term is my own invention, backed by the opinion of the local people who think that the area around the village of Dor has a distinctive character. Administratively, the "Dor" belt is a part of Dar Sueini. Because it is not a separate territorial entity it also follows that it has no separate political status.

The aim of this chapter is to delimit the "Dor" belt from the rest of Sueini by showing its special features. This is followed by an account of the ethnic groups inhabiting Sueini. Special reference will be made to two of them: Kaitinga and Seinga, because of their important political role within the territory. The rest of the chapter is about the role of different ethnic groups in the political and administrative developments in Sueini. It is hoped that this will lay the foundation for a discussion of two complementary themes that characterize social life in "Dor". These are the emphasis on community membership (ethnic incorporation) on the one hand and the articulation of ethnic differentiation on the other. These themes will be examined in more detail in the next two chapters leading to a comprehensive discussion of them and their contribution to the dynamics of ethnic identification in the area.

Now I am going to outline the area I refer to as the "Dor" belt and indicate the reasons for doing so.

The "Dor" belt: limits and characteristics

The "Dor" belt, which I have also referred to elsewhere (chapters one and two) as a transitional zone, runs from Sayé in the west to Disa in the east (the shaded area in Map No. 5). This area is approximately 175 square miles which makes up about 30% of the total area of Sueini.

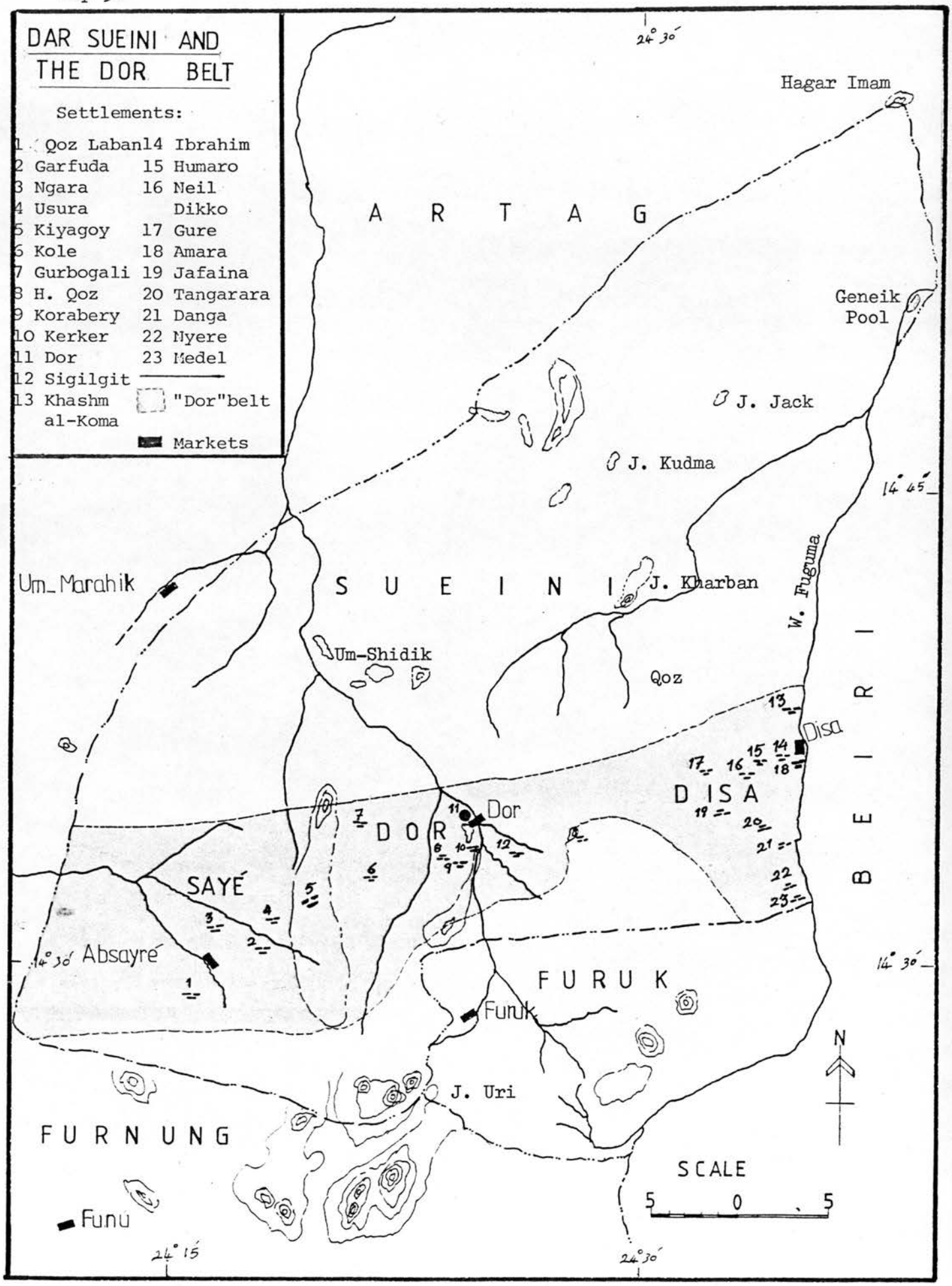
The "Dor" belt embraces about 23 villages which can be roughly grouped into three communities:

Table No. 3. Villages in the "Dor" belt classified by community

Community	Sayé	Dor[1]	Disa
Village	Qoz Laban Garfuda Usura Ngara Kiyagoy	Dor Kerker Sigiligít Hillat Qoz Korabery Kolé Gurbogali	Amara Ibrahim Humaro Khashm al-Koma Neil Dikko Guré Jafaina Tangarara Danga Nyere Medel

1. Dor is also used in this chapter to refer to the village and the local community, which includes six other villages.

Map 5.


DAR SUEINI AND THE DOR BELT
Settlements:
1 Qoz Laban
2 Garfuda
3 Ngara
4 Usura
5 Kiyagoy
6 Kole
7 Gurbogali
8 H. Qoz
9 Korabery
10 Kerker
11 Dor
12 Sigilgit
13 Khashm al-Koma
14 Ibrahim
15 Humaro
16 Neil Dikko
17 Gure
18 Amara
19 Jafaina
20 Tangarara
21 Danga
22 Nyere
23 Medel
"Dor"belt
Markets
24° 30'
Hagar Imam
A R T A G
Geneik Pool
J. Jack
J. Kudma
14° 45'
W. Fuguma
Um_Marahik
S U E I N I
J. Kharban
Um-Shidik
Qoz
Disa
B E I R I
D I S A
Dor
D O R
SAYÉ
Absayré
14° 30'
F U R U K
Furuk
J. Uri
F U R N U N G
Funu
N
SCALE
5 0 5
24° 15'
24° 30'

The villages differ in size, from a few huts (five huts in the case of Danga) to two hundred huts or more in the case of Guré. The specification of the three communities is largely due to natural factors as I shall describe later.

The important question to be asked now is what distinguishes "Dor" from the rest of Sueini? The answer lies in four main characteristics and these are:

Firstly, as I have already indicated, "Dor" is a transitional zone from an ecological point of view. To the north of this area lies the Sahara. If we move southwards we enter into an area of dry savannah and mountain vegetation. It should be noted here that the two factors of drought and desert encroachment are affecting ecological boundaries in northern Darfur to the extent of expanding the desert southwards. If the present conditions continue this will end with the whole area of "Dor" being transformed into a desert. However, the reason why I still consider the transitional aspect of the ecology of "Dor" is that this transformation has not been completed yet.

Secondly, from the point of view of economic activities, the area in question also constitutes the "critical" area where agriculture and pastoralism had been combined in close balance in the past. Only the present events have altered that balance in favour of pastoralism. But social institutions are slow to cope with these changes, so the social organizational features of a mixed economy are still there in evidence.

Thirdly, the underlined area is also characterized by a type of multilingualism which is outstanding in comparison with the rest of Darfur. Arabic is the lingua franca which everybody speaks. Furthermore, some people speak Fur and others Zaghawa (depending on their ethnic identity). Yet, other people speak all three languages. Although the proportion of this latter category may not exceed 20% of the population, the very existence of the phenomenon is significant. In fact it is considered by the neighbouring people to be the most distinguishing characteristic of "Dor". To express this, native observers in Zaghawa and Fur areas refer to the people who live in "Dor" as "Korabery" (Zaghawa word for Fur/Zaghawa). To justify this description of "Dor" people, many stories are told about the alleged ethnic origins of the population there. I have mentioned earlier (chapters two, three and four) how the tradition of mixed ethnic origin is a common theme in the ethno-histories of Darfur.

The fourth characteristic which distinguishes "Dor" is ethnic heterogeneity. The classification of 126 respondants by their ethnic origins (Table No. 12,p.196) demonstrates this fact very clearly. Although the representation of various groups is not equal, there is no single group that constitutes a majority over the others. The reason behind such a high degree of ethnic heterogeneity can be sought in the history of Dar Sueini which I shall review shortly.

Before moving on to the next stage I would like to clarify a small point. It can be noticed from Map No. 5 that the line delimiting the transitional belt bulges northwards between Dor and Disa to exclude Turé. The reason why the latter is excluded from my definition of the "Dor" belt is that it does not share three of the characteristics. This community is made up entirely of Berti people who speak Fur and Arabic only. Moreover the majority of them are cultivators and they have no tradition of transhumant pastoralism.

Dar Sueini

It is one of the eleven omodiyas constituting the "Kutum People's Council". The territory forms a triangular shape (slightly protruding outwards in its southern part). It is surrounded by the Dars of Artag (occupied solely by Zaghawa) in the north, Beiri in the east, Furuk and Furnung (exclusive Fur/Tunjur territories) in the south and Siraif (Aulad Mana) and Tuar (exclusively Zaghawa) in the western corner. The total area approximates to 592 sq. miles.

A series of mountains mark the southern boundaries of Sueini with Furuk and Furnung which make the most outstanding feature of the latter dars. Almost the whole of the eastern boundary consists of a natural phenomenon, the famous Wadi Fuguma which runs northwards to disappear in the desert after filling the Geneik pool.

Considering natural barriers, Sueini is a typical open country covered with short steppe grass and thorn bush (being condensed and tall around wadi beds and hilly areas). This sandy stretch of land is divided into three parts by two parallel ranges of discontinuous hills. The first belt or range of hills runs from Disa in the east and northwest to the Artag border. The other range runs from Tomat in the south and northeastwards to the Artag borders near Umm Marahik. The northernmost part of Sueini is dominated by Qoz while the middle and southern parts are a mixture of sand and hard soil.

Various rainy-season streams intersect the plains of the last two parts while the northern part has no source of water other than the Geneik pool and Wadi Fugama which run in years of good rainfall. Ironically though, these two sources of water are among the most popular water sources in northern Darfur as a whole and constitute the sources of wealth and fame to the people of Dar Sueini.

The historical importance of Sueini is also due to the existence of water at Wadi Fuguma. It was used by the caravan traders who used to cross the Sahara to Egypt and Cyrinaica. Another trade route coming from northern Wadai passes through Sueini. It was, so to speak, the centre of a network of caravan trade routes that linked Darfur with North Africa, West Africa and Egypt. Nevertheless it seems that from the eighteenth century onwards the growing town of Kobé (north-west of El Fasher) has replaced Sueini as a trading centre or meeting point for caravan routes (See Map No. 3, p.52).

The Ethnic groups of Dar Sueini

This small area is inhabited by more clans than foreign observers have admitted. The population is extremely heterogeneous in terms of the ethnic groups represented, so much so that very few villages are inhabited exclusively by people from one ethnic group. The task of locating such units on the map is therefore extremely difficult and highly risky, but for the purpose of simplification I shall attempt to draw a general and crude picture of the distribution of ethnic groups within the area.

Generally speaking the villages to the north of Dor are dominated by Zaghawa clans and others who adopt the Zaghawa way of life (pastoral transhumance). Thus Awlad Daat clan dominate the village of Jak (near the mountain of the same name) and next to them the Kora dominate the village of Kodma (near a mountain of the same name). Various groups of Zaghawa Lilla and Ergenát also live in the northern area with Kaitinga interspersed between them. The Kaitinga however used to concentrate in the villages of Mikhaisiba, Ginnaw, Kharban, Karbab and Um-Shoosh. This is however only a history since all the villages in this northern part of Sueini are virtually deserted now and the entire population has migrated to Dar Said (south) due to the deterioration in living conditions caused by the last drought.

The Zaghawa clan of Ashingé used to concentrate near Jebel Um Qoz (just north of Dor). In the area

between Dor and the Artag borders and around wadi Dor live the clans of Awlad Digain, Awlad Dawré, Tumurké (originally Fur) and Tekera (a group of transformed Arabs living in Tekerabé village). This last area is called Um-Shidik.

Sayé (west of Dor) is mainly dominated by Tunjur but the existence of Zaghawa is evident, and less so the Kaitinga. The outward bending area of Nawra (see Map No. 5) is predominantly occupied by Tunjur and Fur with some Tekera between them (here they are called Awlad Táko). The vicinity of Dor is highly complex with regard to its ethnic composition, the full picture of which will be given in a later chapter.

East of Dor there is a Berti "colony" around the village of Turé and I refer to it as such because it is one of the rare areas in Sueini where the population is exclusively made up of a single ethnic group (the Berti). However, the historical reasons for this "encapsulation" are not clear, and it is difficult to speculate on the possible factors that inhibited their incorporation into the wider society of the "Dor" belt.

The villages around Disa are inhabited by a mixture of Tunjur, Kaitinga, Berti and Zaghawa Dangari plus some Jawama. It should not go without mention that the Kaitinga today are much concentrated in the Disa area than in the rest of the territory, but outside observers associate them with Dor because it is the capital of Sueini and they are the ruling clan.

Of all the clans that live in central Sueini, two are most controversial in terms of ethnic identity. For this they deserve special treatment to discuss their history and tradition of ethnic origin.

The Kaitinga

This group is said to have descended from Ibrahim Kaiti. Opinions seem to be unanimous about this, but it is the further connections of Ibrahim Kaiti that brings the disagreement. A quick look at the lists of lineal genealogies on the next page (Table 4) confirms that the name Kaitinga dervies from Ibrahim Kaiti who is only nine generations away from my informants (with the exception of Mohamed Ali).

The first two columns agree on the four ancestors preceding Ibrahim Kaiti. In Column Three Ibrahim's father is reported as Ahmed who may be Ahmed Sol but it is also possible that it refers to Amhed al-Magur. This column also confirms the ancestors of Ahmed up to Timsah. While the first column reports Ahmed as the father of Timsah, the second column reports Suliman Solong as the father of Timsah and Ahmed al-Hilali as the father of Suliman. The third column puts Suliman and Abdul-Rahim then Ahmed and ends with Bashir al-Nagdawi.

Assuming that Ahmed who is referred to in the first, second and third columns is Ahmed al-Magur, he must be the central character in the myth of the "wise stranger" which we have already referred to in chapter two. Ahmed is reported by local people and historians as belonging

Table 4. A comparison of different lists of Kaitinga genealogies

INFORMANT				
Chief Adam	Mohammad Ali	Mohammad Hamid	Musa Mahmoud	Faki Yusuf (1)
Adam	Ali	Mohammad	Jiddu (2)	Nour
Tahir	Hassan	Hamid	Adam	Bakur
Nourain	Ali	Mohammad	Ahmed	Ahmed Abba
Tahir	Tahir	Ishag	Titi	Bakur
Meidob	Meidob	al-Haj Hussein	Bakur	Mohammad Titi
Yahya	Yahya	Idris Maragan	Abdul Hamid	Abdul Hamid
Gaid	Gaid	Mohammad Marri	Jamma'a	Jamma'a
Jamma'a	Jamma'a	Jamma'a	Abdul Aziz	Gaid
Ibrahim Kaiti	Ibrahim Kaiti	Ibrahim Kaiti	Ibrahim Kaiti	Ibrahim Kaiti
Ahmed Sol	Ahmed Sol	Ahmed	Ahmed al-Magur	Abdalla
Abdul-Rahman Abdu	Abdul-Rahman Abdu	Abdul-Rahman		Mariam (female)
Khatir Agaig	Khatir Agaig	Khatir Agaig		Ahmed al-Magur
Kor Timsah	Kor Timsah	Timsah		Abu-Zaid
Ahmed	Suliman Solong	Abdul Rahim		Mohammad
	Ahmed al-Hilali	Ahmed		Hilal
		Beshir al-Najdawi		

1. The informant is non-Kaitinga.
2. This list is for the royal family of Beiri.

to Bani Hilal clan of North Africa, but we find that our third column indicates that he is the son of Beshir who came from Najd in Arabia, in this case a long list of ancestors has been summarized. The fourth column is the shortest of our lists for it shows Ibrahim to be the son of Ahmed al-Magur. It is important here to mention that all the four lists have been given by Kaitinga informants.

Undoubtedly they all relate their ancestry in one way or another to Ahmed al-Magur and through him claim Arab origin. If this is true, they should be related to both the Fur Kaira and the Tunjur. Not one of my informants, however, made such a claim. They even refused to accept a suggestion from me to this effect. For the purpose of comparison I have supplied another list which has been given to me by an informant from Kutum who is a member of the Takanawi family that belongs to the Fur Kunga clan. On the whole this list does not differ from the first four ones except for the fact that it attributes the ancestry of Ibrahim to a woman ("Maryam") who was the daughter of Ahmed al-Magur.

I do not want to argue for or against the authenticity of these genealogical lists, rather I stress the point that they are fictitious and therefore cannot be trusted beyond a certain point. In this case the genealogical list can be accepted up to Ibrahim Kaiti not only because of the consistency in all the reported lists but most importantly because of the fact that this clan founder is only four generations away from Meidob whose name has been

documented in some of the letters (dating back to the beginning of the nineteenth century) from Keira Sultans to the Kaitinga chiefs regarding disputes over the hakura of Gumgum (north of Disa). The authenticity of these letters, which are in the possession of the present chief (Malik Adam) is beyond any doubt.

The story of Ibrahim Kaiti, the clan founder, and how he came to Sueini is less of a myth because various sources agree on its fundamental points. Also the fact that the events are related to historical Darfur makes it easier to judge the validity of the story. All sources agree that Ibrahim Kaiti started his career as a tailor at the palace of the Keira Sultans in Jebel Marra (Turra). The Fur used to say to him "Kaiti" when they wanted him to sew a cloth (the word "Kaiti" being a corruption of the Arabic word "Khaiti" which has the same meaning).

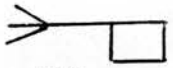
Being an ambitious man, Ibrahim was rewarded by the sultan for his services who gave him a hakura in a part of Jebel Marra called Merri. Faki Adam Ahmed of Kutum, told me that Sultan Ahmed Buker then sent Ibrahim as a "mandub" (Arabic, agent) to Dar Zaghawa after the rebellion of Tunjur and Zaghawa in which they killed the takanawi (ruler of the north).

Supporting this, O'Fahey mentions that Muhammad Fait, from Zaghawa Agaba, who was the most influential Zaghawa chief at the time, resisted Keira domination by rebelling against Bukr. These events could have taken place at any time between 1682 and 1722 (Bukr's reign). But it is not

clear from the story whether the mandub Ibrahim was sent to serve under another takanawi or to substitute for him. As a fair guess it is likely that he operated under the takanawi because the mandub is of a lower administrative rank than the takanawi. Indeed the takanawi was the governor of the north and had several tribes under his rule; Zaghawa, Berti, Tunjur, Meidob, Zayadiya Arab-camel nomads and northern Fur. We are informed that Ibrahim ruled only in Sueini, Artag, Tuar and Gala.

Ibrahim moved from Merri at the end of the dry season, so the story says, with his family and a small army of followers. When he arrived at Arming Dalo (in Furnung) the first rains started. So Ibrahim told his people to spend the autumn cultivating saying, "If the camel sits down it should be loaded." Ibrahim died soon and his son Jamma'a was immediately appointed to be his successor. After harvesting the crop he moved with his people to a place called Jarangway (near Uri). The then chief of the place was a Tunjur Kiwa who was dethroned by the sultan's messenger. From there Jamma'a moved to Um-Qoz (north of Dor) where he established his first capital. His successors moved the capital to Kharban and used to alternate between the latter and Madi (near Jarangway) where they used to spend the rainy and dry seasons consecutively.

I have stated above briefly the story of the arrival of Kaitinga to Dar Sueini. The important point about this is the confirmation of their Fur connection, since their

forebears had undisputably arrived from Merri in Jebel Marra. Furthermore, the present animal brand used by the Kaitinga in the north  is identical to that used by the Fur of Merri.(1) Even the present chief who likes to identify himself with the Zaghawa recognizes that the people of Merri are his kinsmen.

It should not go without saying that Jamma'a eventually gave rise to two Kaitinga royal lineages, for while his son Gaid continued to reign in Sueini another son, Abdul-Hamid went to Beiri where he succeeded his maternal uncle who was a Tunjur.

The Seinga

A small number of people, largely centred in Korabery village are believed to have arrived in Sueini from Jebel Si area. Their name "Seinga" means, in the Fur language, "the people of Si". The people themselves say that their ancestors were Arab Targam who spent some time in Jebel Si before moving to Sueini. Their ancestor "Suliman" who came from Jebel Si is only five generations away from the present Seinga leader "Elias". Malik Adam suggests that the forebeares of Seinga arrived in Sueini as followers of his grandfather "Jamma'a", but this cannot probably be true since Malik Adam himself is eight generations away from his mentioned ancestor.

According to Daw al-Beit, a Seinga notable, his grandfather first stayed in a place called Kotir (west

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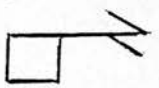
1. I first came across this information in Arkell's papers and my informants in Dor confirmed it later on.

of Dor) which is now deserted. From there they moved to Korabery. Today they are spread in the seven principal villages of central Dor . However, Korabery is still their traditional centre and very few of them, if any have established themselves outside central Dor. It is not known whether the Seinga are the first inhabitants of Korabery village, but their leaders say that the village which was established by their grandfathers used to be near the ruins of an old village (east of the present village). This is probably the ruins of the original village from which the present one took its name. It is said to have been inhabited by a group called "Korabery" who have moved since time immemorial to a village called Gurmu in Dar Artag territory. This clan is now considered to be Zaghawa and its members have lost any connections with Dor.

The suggestion that the Seinga have a connection with the Kaitinga has been made by many members from the latter clan. A Seinga lady from Dor, Hawaaya Abbaker, told me that the evidence of their animal brand  proves that the Seinga arrived with the Kaitinga to Dar Sueini. Whatever the facts of the matter may be, it can be reasonably assumed that the tendency for linking the clans by means of stories relating to migration reflects the position of both groups as having arrived from the Fur native land and thus having the same "ethnic status". According to many informants in "Dor", the Seinga have always been the traditional allies of the Kaitinga chiefs.

It is interesting to note that both the Kaitinga and the Seinga do not confess their Fur connection except in the context of discussing their ethnic histories. This is probably because their economic life links them more with the Zaghawa.

Ethnic Politics and the Administration of Dar Sueini

As mentioned earlier, Dar Zaghawa had a special importance for the Sultanate of Darfur under the Keira because the trans-Saharan caravan routes pass through it. Trade with Egypt and North Africa was vital for the survival of the sultanate because arms, supplies and prestige goods that were necessary for the élite came from there.

Early sultans have probably depended on the good faith of Zaghawa chiefs to provide security for the caravans, but the appointment of the takanawi as the governor of the north by Ahmed Buker marked a new era. Dar Zaghawa became a part of a province that included several territories north and north-east of Jebel Marra, which are occupied by other groups besides the Zaghawa.

Dar Sueini was not only a part of the takanawi's country but had a special significance for the trading operations of the sultanate for it used to be a cross-roads for three important caravan routes, the darb-el-arbain route from Egypt, the trans-Saharan route from North Africa and the route from Waya (the ancient capital of

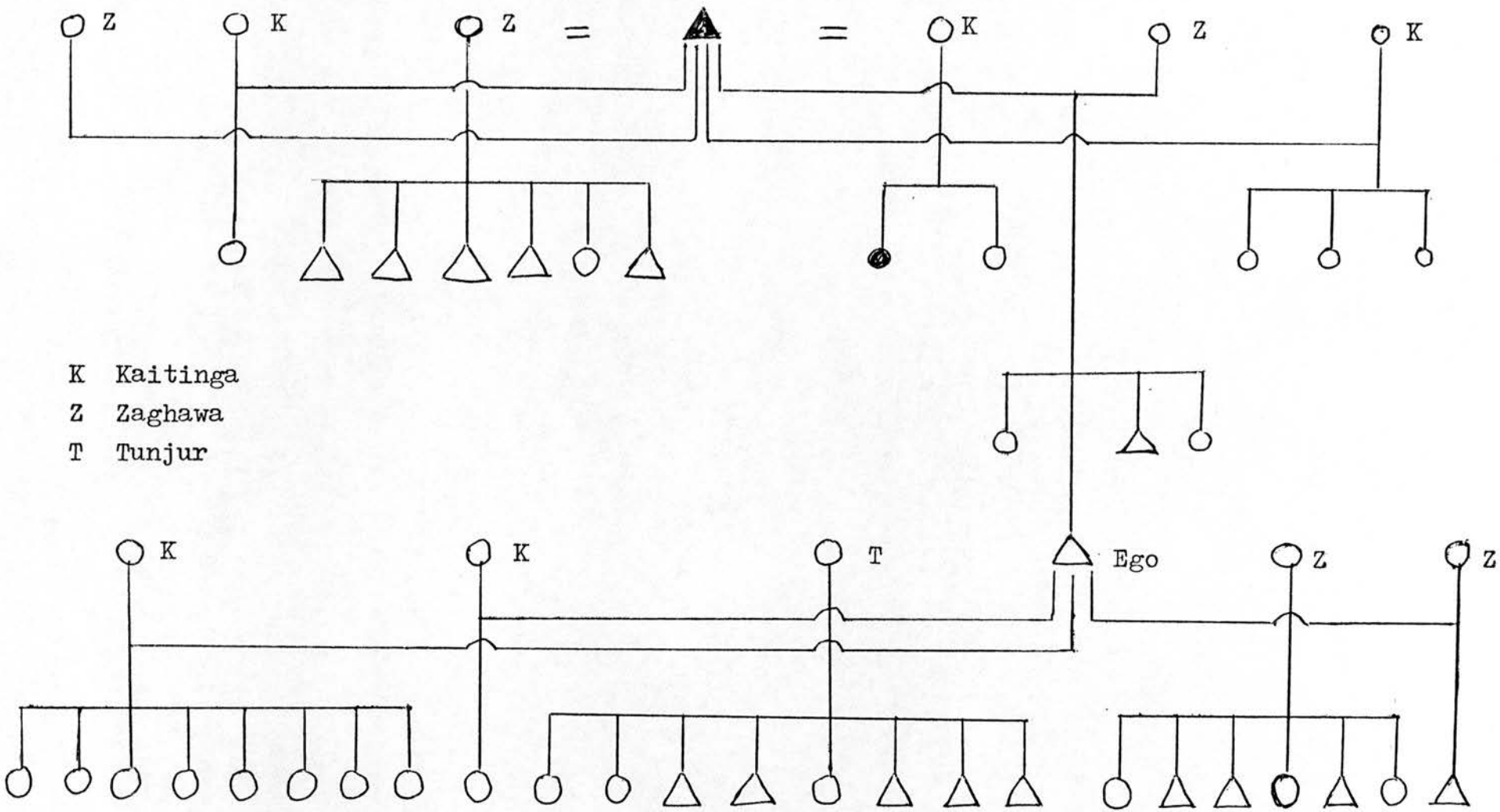
Wadai in northern Chad). They all meet in Sueini before going south to terminate at Kobé (west of el-Fasher), the commercial centre of Darfur sultanate. Although the exact location of the meeting place "Sueini" (see Map No. 3) is not known today, it can be assumed roughly to have been in the vicinity of Dor. The present omodiya took its name from that locality.

As a matter of fact, I have seen ruins of a large village (stone buildings) between Korabery and Kerker villages. Amongst the ruins there is a large complex house with external walls and several rooms surrounding a large square room. Square rooms are extremely rare in Darfurian ruins. When I asked the villagers about the site many of them identified the large building as belonging to a famous merchant. This may not be far from the truth since Uri, the ancient capital of the Tunjur empire is only a few miles to the south of this site.

It is not accidental then that the new mandub, Jammaʿo, should establish his headquarters in Sueini although his sphere of influence included the Zaghawa Dars of Artaj, Tuar and Gala. The Kaitinga, in that context, acted as the agents to the Fur sultans. Indeed, they were a part of the Fur élite themselves.

In the beginning there were two categories of Kaitinga: the descendants of Ibrahim Kaiti and their slaves. Apart from the slaves, all Kaitinga were considered "royal" in the local context. But it was difficult for them to establish themselves in a new territory, which

Fig. 1. Royal marriages involving the present Kaitinga chief and his father.



was already occupied, without mixing with other groups by way of marriage. For the royal family, intermarriage with other groups was essential for the creation of "alliances" with the various groups. However, the record of marriages of the present chief and his father shows a tendency towards intermarriage with the influential groups only, i.e. Zaghawa, Kaitinga and Tunjur. There is no available information on the politics that went on between the Zaghawa dars and the early Kaitings chiefs. Certainly Dar Gala was the first dar to get its "independence" from the Kaitinga court. As for Tuar, it continued to be under Kaitinga influence until the time of Malik Suni of Sueini.

By that time an important administrative development had taken place in Darfur and that is the abolition of the old quadrant administrative system and its substitution with the maqdūmate system (which was also quadrant). In about 1810, during the reign of Sultan Mohammad Fadl, Hasan Segere was appointed maqdūm (viceroy) in the north. His family came from Jebel Meidob and claim a remote Arab origin (see O'Fahey, 1978:122). The office soon became hereditary and the maqdūms replaced the takanawis as rulers of the north.

The maqdūms, unlike the takanawis adopted a policy of alliances, through marriage, with the Zaghawa chiefs. It seems that the latter were also keen to adopt a similar policy with the ultimate goal of gaining independence under the maqdūmate system. Thus Malik Baher of Tuar gave his

daughter Hawa Um-Kolaib in marriage to maqdūm Sharif. When a son, Yusif, was born to the couple, Sharif decided to help Baher get independence from the Kaitinga. Before the end of the first Keira sultanate, Dar Tuar assumed direct contact with the maqdūm thus ending the Kaitinga domination there.

The third Zaghawa Dar, Artag, also managed to get rid of Kaitinga influence over their affairs as late as 1936 when the British District Commissioner designated it as a separate "tribal" country and gave its leadership to BaKheit Yagoub.

The rest of Dar Sueini (the present territory) remained under the leadership of Tahir Nourain, the man whom many Kaitinga blame for the loss of Dar Artag. They think that his policies were not efficient in neutralizing the Zaghawa rebellions. But it is clear that the colonial authorities did not want to get involved in a situation of supporting one ethnic group over the other. Although Dar Artaj was never a united territory before, the D.C. made it into one in order to stop political unrest in the area.

According to the administrative structure of local government at that time, each dar or "country" was divided into smaller units, "damalij" with sub-chiefs who acted as a liasion between the chief and the local people. Five such damalij were left for Sueini under Tahir Nourain, after the independence of Artaj. The following table shows the names of sub-chiefs, location and the clans that

were generally associated with their leadership. One should remember that association between a dimlijiya and a number of clans is not exclusive.

Table 5. The damalij of Dar Sueini after the independence of Artag

Name of Dimlij	Direction/ Area	Clan	Associated Clans
1. Hasan Ali Abu-Kindi	North and East (Qoz and Disa) Dor central	Kaitinga	Kaitinga - A. Daat- Kora - Ergenaat - A. Halal - Seinga - Tumurké
2. Izairig Ahmed	Northwest (Umm-Shidik)	A. Digain	A. Digain - A. Dawré
3. Adam Ismail Muhāgir	Southeast (Guré and Turé)	Lamboro (Fur)	Fur - Berti - Tunjur
4. Haroon Ismail	Southwest and West (Nawra and Sayé)	Tunjur	Tunjur - A. Tako - Fur
5. Omer Basher	North	Isherein (Zaghawa)	Isherein

Shortly after the partition of Sueini into Artag and Sueini proper chief Tahir Nourain was dismissed by the D.C. for disagreement over the partition and other administrative problems. His son, the present chief, Adam Tahir, was then appointed his successor in 1937. According to him, he immediately embarked on the task of

revising the composition of the damalij and its leaders.[1] By 1938, the revised system came into effect with nine damalij. Only one former dimlij lost his position (Omer Basher of Zaghawa Isherein) while the others had their territories compromised.

Table 6. The revised damalij of Dar Sueini in 1938

Name of Dimlij	Direction/ Area	Clan	Associated Clans
1. Hasan Ali Abu Kindi	Dor Central - Disa	Kaitinga	Kaitinga
2. Mawlodo Othman	Northeast (Jack-Kodma)	A. Daat	A. Daat - Kora - Ergenaat
3. Izairig Ahmed	Northwest (Umm-Shidik)	A. Digain	A. Digain - A. Dawré - Lilla - Fetera - Tumurké
4. Idris Adam	North (Diar-Umm-Qoz)	Tumurké	Tumurké
5. Idris Hasab Allah	East (Gumé)	A. Halal	A. Halal
6. Adam Ismail Muhagir	East (Guré)	Lamboro	Tunjur/Fur
7. Ahmed Nur Yusif	Southeast (Turé)	Berti	Berti
8. Haroon Ismail	Southwest and West (Nawra/ Sayé)	Tunjur	Tunjur/Fur - A. Tako
9. Elias Jalal al-Din	Dor Central	Seinga	Seinga and others

1. The malik was a young boy when he was appointed. Khalifa Ali acted as his guardian. Effectively this means that the reshuffle was not done by the chief.

The most striking feature of this new list is that four of the five new units have been carved out from the Dor central dimlijiya which was headed by Hasan Ali Abu-Kindi (the chief's uncle). Given the background of the breaking down of the former territories of Sueini which was largely a response to rebellions from local ethnic groups, it is clear that the same factor has also brought about the new list of dimlijs. The new chief was faced with internal protests from various ethnic groups who did not approve of the concentration of power in the hands of Kaitinga. The new formula gained the new chief more popularity. However, in the same scheme he undermined the authority of an important Fur leader, Adam Ismail Muhāgir, by setting a separate Berti dimlijiya under Ahmed Nur Yusuf. The latter withdrew at least half of the followers who used to support the former. This created some tension between the leaders.

The above divisions continued up to 1952 when the dimlijiya system was abolished and substituted with the omodiya system. According to the new system, the chief should maintain a direct contact with the village shaikhs. The chief himself is considered an omda for his dar. He is allowed to appoint one to three assistants who serve as a liason between him and the shaikhs of various localities.

At the beginning the local council officer allowed chief Adam to appoint one administrative assistant. This post was filled by Khalifa Ali (his cousin). A few years more other ethnic groups started to complain, demanding

further "devolution" of power. By 1957, the council officer agreed to the appointment of two more administrative assistants. The posts went to Abbaker Ahmed Nur of Turé (and son of former dimlij) and to Ahmadai Ibrahim Abū-Tirak of Um-Shidik. The Zaghawa element has clearly been neglected in this new scheme of power sharing.

Meanwhile the power sources of the chief increased with the opening of the native court in Dor in 1956.(1) Chief Adam then became the permanent chief of the court as well. With dual authority (administrative and judicial) chief Adam became more powerful and less popular. Despite opposition from many groups, he continued to be a powerful and influential chief. His abilities were well recognized at the district council level, for he was included in the membership of many committees that looked into disputes between leaders of dars or ethnic groups.

However, the real challenge to the chief's popularity was shown during three general elections for the national assembly. In the elections of 1958 and 1965 chief Adam was one of the candidates of the Unionist Party in the constituency of Kutum Central. His calculations were that the people in his dar would support him over other candidates. If that had happened the prospects of his winning the elections seemed good. But, of course, the

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1. It was first started at Disa in 1952 as a joint court for Sueini and Beiri. The chiefs of both dars alternate on the presidency of the court.

basis for political loyalties were different from that of local administration.

The opponents of the chief, mainly from Tunjur and Berti, belonged to the Ansar sect and the Umma (National) Party. Consequently they supported the candidate of their party, a Tunjur from Kutum, who won the elections three times. In the elections of 1969, before Numeiri came to power, the chief offered to his opponents that he would contest as an Umma Party candidate if they would guarantee their votes. Expectedly, they refused. The obvious reason is that their opposition derives from a complexity of factors; ethnic, local, and sectarian.

One of the opposition leaders, Faki Mohammad has maintained an anti-Kaitinga attitude throughout his political career. At first he was his father's successor as the Imam of Dor (later replaced by Faki Ishag who is an affine of the chief). He was also the landowner of a large hakura southwest of Dor. Later he became the school faki in Dor. Above all, he has always been the local leader of the Ansar sect and the organizer of Umma Party political campaigns.

However, one thing remains certain in Dor politics and that is the discontinuity between political and ethnic loyalties. It is a fact that not all the Kaitinga supported the chief nor all the Tunjur sympathize with Faki Mohammad. In other words it is not ethnic loyalties that generate political differences but the latter are expressed in terms of the former.

New developments have taken place since 1969. The abolition of the "native administration" system in 1971 and the native courts in 1972 has curbed the power of chiefs and omdas. Although Adam Tahir managed to remain as the administrative head of Sueini, his power decreased very much as a result of the new changes.

The Numeiri regime has substituted for the traditional structure of native administration a new one based on popular participation. The villagers now have the power to elect and participate in a variety of organizations (Sudanese Socialist Union, Village Councils, and Village Development Committees). This had the effect of democratizing the process of decision making within each community. As a result the chief's power is now restricted to the collection of taxes. This does not mean that the once powerful figures have stopped being influential in public life. Indeed they continue to be so through their own followers who enter these organizations.

One important consequence of the new structure of administration is that it has broken the monopoly of the Kaitinga over political offices. At the same time it has not promoted competition between the various ethnic groups that are represented in the area. Of course, a minimum degree of mobilization of support through ethnic allegiances does exist at about the same level as before the changes. In addition to this I noticed that when public issues were discussed my informants used to

emphasize local community membership (Sayé, Dor central, Turé, Nawra, Um-Shidik and Disa).

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In this chapter I have drawn the boundaries of the "Dor" belt which was the subject of my intensive field-work. I have also outlined the main characteristics of this area in comparison with the territorial unit, Sueini, which I have described subsequently. This clarified my points about "Dor" as it became easier to judge the special features of it in relation to the surrounding areas.

I have listed four features that characterize "Dor": ecological transition, mixed economy, multilingualism and ethnic heterogeneity. I am not claiming any uniqueness for "Dor" but rather argue that these features which may be found in other parts of the region are combined in a critical manner in "Dor". To examine these features more closely, I shall deal with the first two in the next chapter and discuss the last two of them in the following one.

In the first chapter, I have argued about the importance of incorporating historical data and widening the field of investigation as a methodological requirement for dealing with problems of interethnic relations. In conformity with this, I have reflected briefly, in this chapter, on the major events and trends in the political history and recent political developments in Dar Sueini. It seems that one possible conclusion to be made here is that ethnic migrations and the special position of Sueini as a crossroads of trade routes have contributed towards the creation of a multiethnic community in "Dor".

CHAPTER VI

THE ORGANIZATION OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES IN "DOR"

In Chapter II I divided Darfur into five ecological zones. The northern zone , which is dominated by Dar Zaghawa, starts roughly from Furuk northwards. Although the boundaries of ecological zones are difficult to draw on land, it is not far from the truth to assert that the "Dor" belt is a transitional zone from this point of view. The fact that the agronomic dry boundary for millet cultivation lies just south of it supports this claim. The ecological position of this belt may well be described by using Mensching's expression "vulnerable ecosystem(s) between the desert marginal zones and the dry savannah" (Mensching 1977:2). The land here is dominated by stretches of sand with the exception of a hilly strip that separates Dor central from Sayé.

Cultivation and animal husbandry are both practised to approximately the same degree. Thus the "belt" is not only ecologically transitional, but it also marks a transition from cultivation to pastoralism and vice versa. Because the belt is very narrow, many observers failed to recognize its special position. It is therefore not surprising that the Tubianas treat this part of Darfur as a Zaghawa country and transhumant pastoralism as the major occupation of the people (Tubiana and Tubiana 1977).

The authors have approached the country from Chad and therefore considered "Dor" as an extension to Dar Zaghawa.

During the last eight years or so big climatic changes have taken place (mainly the drought that devastated the African Sahelian zone) which accelerated large-scale population movements across the whole region of Darfur. Social change is on the move here and the ethnography I give here may well be altered in a matter of a few years. However, I will try to indicate new and future trends where possible and give some idea about the direction of such change.

Against such a background I will present an approximate picture of the economic activities currently pursued by the people inhabiting the "Dor" belt. I will first start by evaluating the position of land.

Land

In the chapter on the Zaghawa I have argued that the official land administration policy which was introduced by the sultans of Darfur was less in evidence in Dar Zaghawa and I gave three reasons to support my argument. That argument does not apply to "Dor" because it used to be a part of the agricultural zone. The evidence that Dar Sueini was divided into hawakir is well established. Fifteen documents (letters from sultans and senior administrators which date from the beginning of the 19th century) have been recovered by the Tubianas and published by

Abu-Salim (Abu-Salim 1975). The subject of the majority of these documents is various disputes concerning two hawakir in the north-eastern corner of Sueini; Gamgum and Banabin. Abu-Salim has mistakenly considered these hawakir to be in Dar Meidob. The confusion has probably arisen from the fact that one of the Kaitinga chiefs who is frequently mentioned in the documents is called Meidob (see Table No. 4). Naming of people after groups or clans is popular in Darfur and this case should be understood as a mere coincidence.

Both the above mentioned hawakir were owned by Kaitinga dignitaries. Some of them still make these claims. Indeed the whole collection of documents discovered by the Tubianas have come into the hands of the present Kaitinga chief during his presidency of the court in the sixties when dispute over land was brought in front of the court and these documents were produced as evidence.

In the area of Dor central itself the Tunjur family of Faki Khalil have maintained the administration of their hakura (located to the south-west of Hillat Qoz) until recent times. Their traditional role as the Imams of Hillat Qoz entitled them to the endowments as well as the customary dues paid by peasants who cultivate in their hakura. I may cite here a story of a court case which reflects some of the "politics" of hawakir.

Faki Mohammad, the successor of his father Faki Khalil, used to receive ushoor (dues) and fitr (endowments) from the peasants who cultivate in his hakura/ardiya.

Faki Mohammad was on bad terms with the present chief. A man from the chief's "camp" once refused to give him the customary payments he was entitled to as the owner of the hakura and Imam. Instead the man declared his intention of giving them to the Imam of Dor (appointed by the chief). Faki Mohammad then asked the man to stop cultivating in his hakura. The man refused and the case was taken to the court. The court, headed by the chief, denied Faki Mohammad the right to ask for any dues from the man or stop him from cultivating the land. Although the ruling of the court is consistent with current Sudanese law on land ownership, Faki Mohammad accused the chief of taking sides with the defendant because they both belong to the same religious sect (Tiganiya). Such problems, of course, no longer occur since the drought has altered millet production drastically hence land ownership is reduced to a mere symbol of prestige.

Another example of an hakura comes from Sayé where the famous hakura of Daberdé has been divided into five fisan (Nagara, Shoma, Kuru, Kola and Kiwa). This one also belonged to a Tunjur family.

So the problem of rights over land is similar to that in the Fur areas, land is communally owned through families who have rights of usufruct. Traditionally, farmers give such families customary dues which amount to about one -tenth of their production of grain. Other products are not taxed. Recently these payments have been outlawed and effectively brought to an end by the recurring drought.

Grazing land is not subject to any kind of restrictions except that which forbids trespassing a cultivated land or an enclosed one.

So far, we have been concerned with rain-fed land which represents more than 95% of the total area of "Dor". There is however some irrigated land as well which deserves mention. This is mainly the tiny strip of land alongside Wadi Fuguma in the Disa area. Because sub-surface water is available here, the people dig wells (2-5 metres deep) from which they irrigate their vegetable gardens. The land was originally operated as rain-fed land with the customary land ownership as the basis of its administration. In the late fifties some people started to borrow dry season cultivation techniques from the Kutum area. The land became permanently owned by the farmers since the rule is that nobody can take away any piece of land unless the person who cultivates it has left it fallow for more than three years.

In the rain-fed land people are forced to leave some land to be fallow when it becomes infertile and so land ownership circulates more frequently. Although the law for the irrigated land is the same, its application has led to a different pattern of land ownership. This development meant also that land-owning families have lost their traditional power and with it the customary payments made to them by the farmers.

An important point to be made here is the two-way relationship between land use and residence. Because of

the lack of transport and the use of primitive agricultural tools, it follows that a person can only cultivate land which is near to his/her place of residence. As such it can be safely argued that the availibility of cultivable land is an important factor in deciding the place of residence and vice versa. This does not mean that they are the only factors nor should it imply that the local people give it first priority when they make decisions about these matters. I will elaborate on this point later in Chapter VII, where specific examples will be given.

Now I wish to consider the issue of the organization of labour which is an important variable in the economic system.

Division of Labour and Basic Economic Units

In a subsistence economy like the one we are dealing with, human labour is vital for production of food and other goods. Wage labour, to begin with, is almost absent except in very limited situations. The main reason for this is a fairly common one, the lack of specialization. Apart from the blacksmiths who produce iron tools, the rest of the population share more or less common knowledge about dealing with their environment.

One of the limited situations where wage labour may occur is when a blacksmith runs short of money because his "business" is not providing him with enough money to make a living. Thus Abdalla (a blacksmith who has recently settled in Dor village) was available for doing casual

work during the weeding period in the autumn of 1977. He was doing the work for cash. Very poor families also release one of their young members (preferably a boy) to work for cash during the weeding period or to be employed as herdsboys as in Dar Zaghawa (in which case the payment is in kind, animals). All this is occasional and limited, and personal relationships play an important part in a work "contract". Persons from ex-slave families are the common example in most villages.

It is evident, therefore, that the household is the main source of labour. In comparison with the neighbouring areas it is possible to represent the pattern of organization of household labour with a continuum. This starts from the Fur end where emphasis on individual labour is high to the Zaghawa end where pooling of labour is made necessary by the practice of pastoralism. The "Dor" case is a mixture of both systems, hence it represents the middle of the continuum.

The members of a household usually perform most of the jobs they need without outside help. This is largely true about day-to-day work which is done through a framework of division of labour that is based on the principles of sex and age. Theoretically, a man is responsible for providing a living for his wife and children. This is true only to a limited extent, for usually the members of the family themselves produce what they consume and sometimes provide the father with surplus products which he can sell for money and buy manufactured goods. As the head

of his family, a man therefore directs its labour according to the interests and conditions of the household.

The wife, for example, is constantly responsible for the preparation of food, water for domestic consumption and firewood. Her grown-up daughter essentially performs the same duties since these are sex-prescribed roles. During the rainy season female members of the household participate fully in agricultural production and in cases of families with large investment in animals, work in the fields is left entirely for women. In any case, men do clear the bushes especially when a new farm site is chosen.

Young male members on the other hand participate with their mothers in working the fields but if the family owns camels, grown-up boys entirely devote their time to looking after the herd. In the case of cattle and goats, children under ten years old will be able to look after them during the rainy season while the others engage in agricultural work.

Another aspect of the division of labour within the family is reflected in labour migration. Those who go to work in places away from home send back money and gifts for the rest of the family.

However, the extent to which any household conforms to the division of labour indicated above will depend on its internal structure or composition plus the degree of investment in livestock (as shown earlier). As among the Fur there are three types of households: newly established family composed of husband, wife and children; extended

family which is composed of more than one nuclear family, and separate uterine units of a compound family.

At the beginning a nuclear family usually depends on the labour of the couple plus the help that they get from relatives. If they have any animals it will be left with either of their parents' families. Later, when their children grow up they can separate their animals.

An extended family works in a slightly different way. The newly married couple who usually reside matrilocally in the first few years of their life together, usually cultivate their own separate fields but will pool their labour for the performance of general duties within the household (e.g. looking after animals, house-building, cooking, etc.)

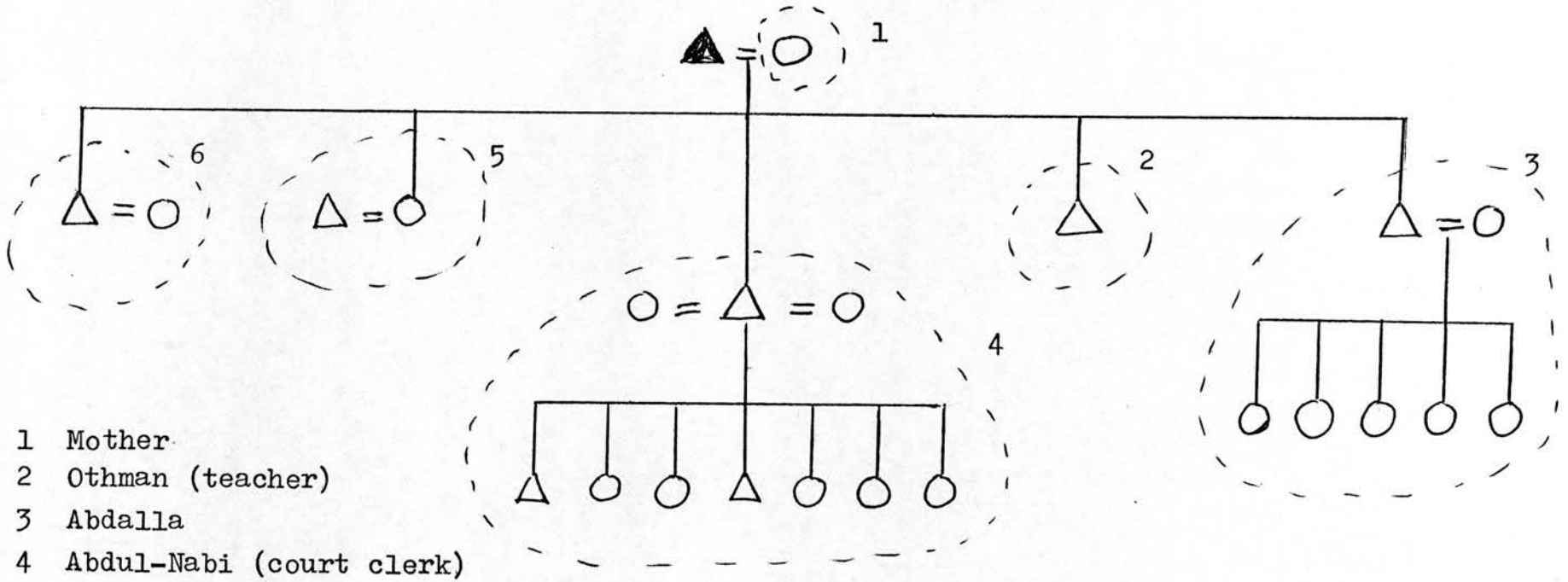
In the case of a compound family performance of work goes according to its components of uterine units. These latter ones perform in the same way as a nuclear family. Of course, some of them have the characteristics of a complex family (when a daughter gets married). Where this is applicable the division of labour follows the same pattern as that of the complex ~~household~~ family.

Thus, in the "Dor" area, the function of agricultural production is done by nuclear families and uterine units of compound families. Unlike the Fur, the production unit is made up of more than one person. In the case of pastoral production the units seem to expand so that more than one nuclear family and all the units of a compound family may have a joint herd or flock of animals reared by selected members of these units.

The distribution pattern is, however, similar in all three cases. In all of them, the resident unit "household" is the consumption unit. Again, the composition and size of such a unit depends on the circumstances of the household, whether it is a nuclear, an extended or a compound family, and whether some of its members are away looking after animals or working as labour migrants. On the whole it is fair to say that in "Dor" consumption units correspond with production units and therefore the household can be considered as the primary economic unit. To illustrate these points I give a brief description of three different households in Dor.

The first example is that of the"children of Adam Othman" in Dor village. This extended family has lost its head (the father died several years ago), but the members are still holding together under the leadership of the elder son Abdalla. The three brothers Abdalla, Abdul-Nabi and Othman plus their married sister and their mother live in one compound in Dor. Another brother who works in the army lives in Khartoum with his wife and visits Dor occasionally. Abdalla and Abdul-Nabi are both married (the first has four children from one wife and the second has eight children from two wives, one of whom is dead). Othman, a school teacher, is married but has not started his family life yet. He lives as a bachelor within the compound during vacations or when he works in the village school. Their sister is married (with two children) to a man who was away as a labour migrant in

Fig. 2. Production units of the extended family of "children of Adam Othman".



1 Mother
2 Othman (teacher)
3 Abdalla
4 Abdul-Nabi (court clerk)
5 Sister
6 Brother (soldier)

Libya. Their nuclear family is still attached to the extended family (they will probably gain independence in the near future).

Trying to delimit the work-units of this large extended family we notice from the diagram (Fig. 2) that six such units can be specified. With the exception of the mother and the bachelor brother, the rest of the units coincide with nuclear families. In the future these will develop into full households with their own separate work units. It is important to remember in this context that the work-unit is also a food preparation unit for although food is communally consumed within the compound each unit has its own separate kitchen in which food is prepared. However, the bachelor is not included in this arrangement and has access to any kitchen in the compound. He contributes to the well being of the group by helping them in times of need and by buying gifts for them. His contribution to his mother is regular and more formalized. As for her, she associates more with her daughter (especially when her husband is away). Sometimes she does not have to cook her food (this depends on her age). So far our description of the activities of the household has been limited to consumption and non-pastoral production. What about other forms of activities then?

Regarding the pastoral activities of the members of the household a somewhat different pattern emerges. The family owns a joint herd of camels that they inherited from their father. The inheritance was conducted according

Sharia law and everybody knows his animals in the herd. Some of them have bought camels from their own savings and added it to the herd. The whole herd is managed by the elder brother Abdalla with the aid of two employed herdboys. As Abdalla is away most of the time looking after the animals, he has no chance of making a living from other occupations. This is compensated by payments he gets from his brothers in return for the service he performs. He is either paid in kind (camels) or exempted from a similar payment to the herdsboys (all payments in the pastoral sector are in kind and annual).[1] In this respect then the whole extended family appears as one production unit. This is because pastoral activities require certain types of labour and dedication. Similarly, Abdul-Nabi owns a large flock of goats kept in the village and is looked after by his children under his supervision. Other members of the family have small numbers of goats in the flock but they do not pay him anything for this favour (perhaps because it is not a demanding job).

It is clear then from the analysis of the organization of production and consumption as manifested in the example of the "children of Adam Othman" that the degree of co-operation is intensified in pursuing activities in the pastoral sector while the same group breaks into smaller units when conducting agricultural or other activities.

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1. Small numbers of animals are traditionally excluded from payment. These may belong to relatives or friends.

Consumption also brings the members of the household together closely to the extent of becoming one consumption unit.

The second example is the compound family of Abdul -Aziz. This family is typically composed of three households. Each household lives separately and constitutes a separate economic unit. This pattern is generated by polygamy and according to practice each wife becomes the nucleus of a domestic unit. Thus the first wife of Abdul-Aziz lives in the far western end of Dor village with her children. His second wife lives also in Dor village at the eastern end of the village. The third wife lives in the village of Sigligit to the south-west of Dor (about three miles away). She has her sister's daughter living with her. The last two wives are childless.

All three units cultivate separate fields and own separate flocks of goats and sheep (the second wife does not have animals because she has no child to look after them). Likewise they do not consume their food together. They are only linked through their relationship with the husband. Ideally, also, they are considered to be in opposition to each other. In practice this opposition does not have to develop into enmity. Of course, geography plays an important role in reducing the chances of "friction" between the co-wives. The man, on the other hand, is a production unit by himself for he earns a salary as a guard at the girls' school in Dor, but he does

Fig. 3. The compound family of Abdul-Aziz and its constituent households

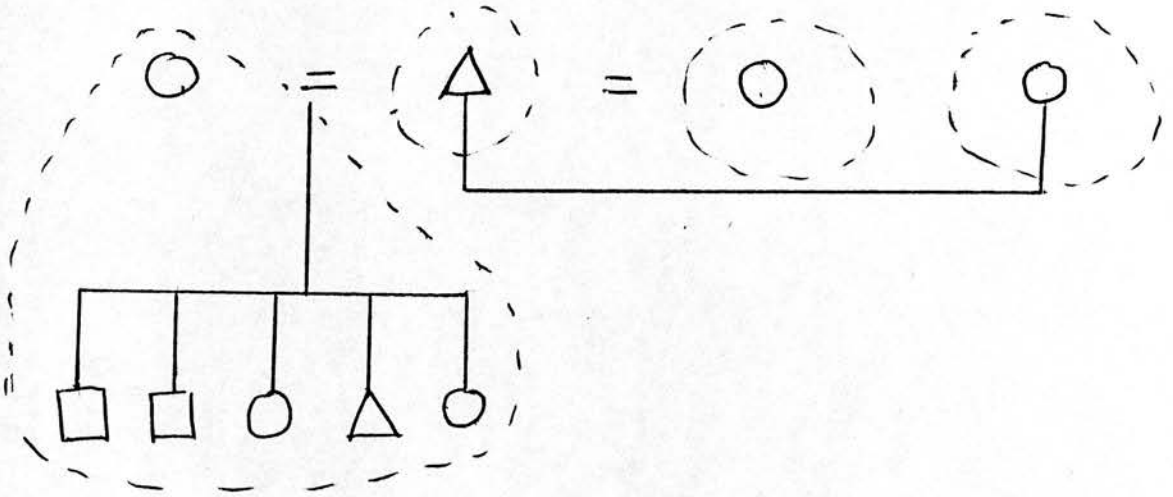
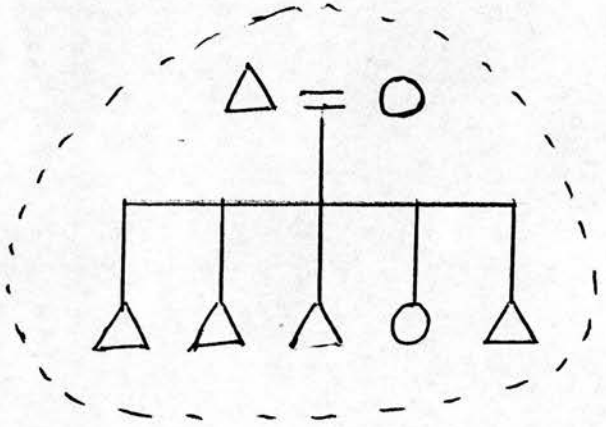


Fig. 4. The elementary family of Faki Mahmoud



not constitute a consumption unit for he stays with each of his three wives in rotational pattern. Consequently, his "family" cannot be treated as one economic unit either from the production or consumption points of view.

The third example represents the most common nuclear family. In the context of Darfur such families always start as parts of other families (family of orientation of one of the spouses, usually the wife's). Typically Faki Mahmoud, a Zaghawi from Sigiligit stayed with the family of his wife Kubra Mustafa (from the Kaitinga royal family) for the first few years of their marriage. But after his family gained its independence he chose to stay there.(1) They have six children now and they constitute an independent economic unit. They cultivate their own fields and consume their food separately. They co-operate with the family of the wife on a basis of mutual interest that exists between kinsmen and/or affines.

Now a final word should be said about extra-familial sources of labour. Generally speaking, relatives are supposed to answer one's call for help. The practical implementation of this principle depends on specific situations and relationships between the people involved. The general observation is that people allocate their labour in a rational and exchange it on reciprocal basis.

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1. There are various factors involved in the choice of residence, for further information and discussion, see next chapter.

Other forms of co-operative labour are mobilized through community-get-together work parties. The person who organizes the work party supplies food and drinks for the attendants, but this should not be misunderstood as a payment. As I argued before, labour is reciprocated with labour (or social bonds as in the case of helping relatives and elderly people).

The most common situation for mobilization of work parties are "weeding" and house-building. The two most important types are "nafir" and "banbani". Nafir is any work party which is attended by members of the local community, including relatives of the organizer. In contrast, banbani is a work party held by an organizer, who provides the food, for the benefit of another person. The most common banbani is that which is organized by a man for weeding the field of his mother-in-law. This usually takes place before the wedding and is seen as payment of tribute to her. This tradition comes from the Fur area where the mother-in-law plays a major role in the process of marriage.(1)

One should emphasize again here that the organization of work parties, from the point of view of who participates, depends highly on the factor of residence. As such, even the help of relatives depends very much on how near they reside to each other. I shall elaborate more on this issue in the next chapter.

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1. In contrast to this, the Zaghawa chap pays tribute to the mother-in-law by watering her animals during the dry season.

As I suggested earlier in this section, the analysis of the organization of labour in "Dor" especially in relation to household composition shows similarities to both the Fur and Zaghawa cases. No doubt this has much to do with the type of economic system that provides the framework for the organization of labour. Moreover, we have also seen how the composition of the household, which is the primary economic unit, depends on the type of economic activities that are pursued by the members (see Chapters III and IV).

As I will show later in Chapter VIII, the significance of the activities of a household goes beyond the mere economic performance of its members to the identification with the ethnic group which is most associated with the specific form of economic activity. The activities of cultivation and pastoralism, in this case, are associated with the Fur and Zaghawa ethnic groups, respectively.

In the following sections I am going to look more closely into these two activities.

Cultivation

Cultivation is a very old practice in this part of Darfur. Some of my old informants have suggested that until the beginning of this century the people relied solely on cultivation for their subsistence. In view of the available evidence on climatic changes it would not be far fetched to suggest that before the turn of the century the transitional zone between the desert and the

dry savannah was probably to the north of its present position. If this were true, the projection of social change for this area would be dominated by a slow movement from agriculture to pastoralism. The transformation is not yet complete for the people still cultivate their old farms (even in the highly risky situation) while increasingly invest in animals. For this reason, they can be considered as practising a degree of transhumance.

Cultivation of millet in dry-season gardens is the dominant agricultural practice. Apart from this staple crop, people cultivate sesame, ground-nuts and watermelons. All three are useful for producing cooking oil from their seeds. Oil mills, driven by camels are still in operation in the village of Sando (in Furuk). A farmer who is lucky to harvest good sesame or ground-nuts may take it to the oil mill and agree with its owner on the payment (usually in kind) and have the job done for him.

As for the plots, they are largely similar to those in the Fur areas to the south. The average size of a plot may be five mukhammas (one mukhammas being equivalent to 8700 sq. meters, in other words 294 mukhammas in a sq. mile). Each household may have between two to four millet gardens (usually in different directions). Such a policy is not dictated only by the scarcity of land but more effectively by the fluctuation in rainfall, for its amount varies annually as well as spatially.

The majority of households in Dor village, for example, have millet gardens in two different directions.

The area to the north of the village is characterized by its relatively hard ground. This type of soil needs a lot of water (by local standards) in order that the cultivation yields good produce. One major advantage is that the soil of Jombo (the local name for this area) is relatively fertile. That is why many households keep their plots in Jombo and at the same time cultivate other plots to the south of the village (between Korabery and Kerker villages). Here the soil is sandy and less fertile but the vegetation can resist temporary drought that often occurs between the few occasions of rainfall.

The agricultural cycle begins in April when people start clearing the millet fields. The general outline of agricultural activities round the year as shown in Table No. 7 is an approximate representation of the reality. Many factors affect the exact time-table of a given household. I cannot describe these factors here in detail, but they cover such things as the beginning of rain and its distribution, amount of labour force available for the household and income from other resources all of which affect the distribution of activities throughout the year.

Sowing and weeding are the most urgent and demanding agricultural activities, so one has to ensure proper labour supply at the right time. During this period agricultural work takes priority over everything else; attendance to markets and the court decrease considerably (except for cases of conflict over land, which tend to

Table 7. Distribution of activities during one agricultural cycle

MONTH	ACTIVITY
April	Clearing of ground begins, also late threshing
May	Dry sowing
June	First rains
July	Heavy rains, sowing completed
mid-July	Weeding begins
August	Weeding continues till end of August
September	Second weeding (till mid-September)
October	No agricultural activity
November	Harvest begins
December	Early threshing begins
January	No agricultural activity
February	No agricultural activity
March	No agricultural activity

Table 8. Distribution of activities during the peak agricultural season (weeding)

WEEK	ACTIVITY	NOTES
First Second	"Hot weeding", sowing of sesame, okra and ground nuts	Sesame, okra and ground nuts are sowed after weeding the ground.
Third Fourth	Collective work-parties started	Each household sends a representative to the party while the rest continue weeding their field.
Fifth	Collective work-parties reduced	
Sixth	First weeding stopped and second weeding begins	Second weeding is optional, depending on the situation of particular fields

Table 9. Time-table for the daily activity of a work-unit in the peak agricultural season

TIME	ACTIVITY
6.30 a.m.	Morning tea
7.00	Man and adult sons go to the field
7.30	Woman and children take breakfast
8.00	Animals released from enclosures
8.30	Woman goes to the field
9.30	Man and sons take proper breakfast
9.30	Woman starts working
10.00	Man and sons resume work
2.00 p.m.	Break and lunch
4.00	All resume work
5.30	Woman goes back to the village to prepare dinner
6.30	All go back to the village

NOTES:

1. On market days women and men work until mid-day, then leave for the market (in case they don't have a certain trade).

2. In the last half of the weeding period work is a bit relaxed. All members of the family may take their breakfast at home.

3. Friday is considered a religious holiday. People also work a half-day on Wednesdays because of an old superstition regarding the prohibition of work on this day. Work parties, however, do continue to operate.

increase after the first rains). Social occasions other than burial and mourning rituals for the dead are postponed. Table No. 9 shows that people spend at least twelve hours (from dawn to dusk) in the fields, which is very considerable by local standards.

Regarding the sex ratio of those working in the fields, the general impression is that more women work in the fields than men. Unfortunately there is no adequate statistical data to allow us to work out the exact sex ratio . Nevertheless one can think of two factors that contribute to this sexual disproportion. The first one is the obvious fact that some men look after camels and sheep since these animals cannot be kept in the village. The second factor is associated with rural-urban drift in the Sudan and cross-border migration to the neighbouring states of Libya and Saudi Arabia. The majority of men migrate temporarily in order to get enough money to supplement the income of their respective households, get married or be able to buy some animals. They therefore prefer not to take their wives with them, a sensible decision indeed if we consider the cost of living in the town.

One last comment on cultivation in the "Dor" belt is that despite its many similarities with its Fur counterpart one essential difference remains to be noticed and that is the fact that fields here are owned by households. All members of the household work collectively in the field, unlike the Fur where each adult individual may have his/her own field to cultivate.

However, despite the enormous effort people make in the agricultural sector in Dor, they have never been able to achieve self-sufficiency in the last decade. Every year they set out southwards to buy grain from the southern Fur areas. If the present climatic conditions do not improve, they will inevitably give up cultivation in favour of livestock breeding which is becoming also more risky as the pastures become more scarce.

Animal husbandry

By and large, pastoralism in "Dor" is similar to the practice in proper Zaghawa territories. Adequate statistics of animals and ownership are extremely difficult to obtain for two reasons. First, there is a common belief that when animals are counted that is a bad omen which will cause death for them. Consequently people refer to their animals by their "names" and genealogical relations. Secondly, there is a fear that information obtained about the number of animals (especially on paper) may eventually find its way into the government tax records, something every pastoralist in Sudan does his best to avoid. This makes it difficult to assess the extent to which animal husbandry is adopted by the people of "Dor".

However, the Tubianas who tried to work out average numbers for herds in different Zaghawa regions (including "Dor") on the basis of "rich" and "poor" owners have indicated that the numbers of camels and sheep for the "Dor" area are about average while the number of cattle is

less than average. As they did not make it clear what territory is included in "Dor" it is difficult to assess this claim. My own feeling, from first observation, is that engagement in animal husbandry in "Dor" area is less than average if compared with the rest of Zaghawa districts of Artag, Tuar, Gala and Kobé. Northern Sueini was certainly rich in animal resources but the recent drought has disrupted that picture, for the area is no more occupied -- a total of thirty villages have been deserted and its population moved to the eastern and southern zones of Darfur. Even in the "Dor" belt where villages are still occupied, many people have left for the south.

In this connection, I have noticed that more cattle owners moved to the south than camel or sheep owners. This is not surprising since southern Darfur is identified with the Baggara (see Haaland 1972) and cattle breeding. On the other hand, northern Darfur is associated with the breeding of camels and sheep. The main reason for this pattern is that while cattle require richer pastures and drink water more frequently, camel and sheep are best suited to graze dry savannah and semi-desert pastures. They also drink water less frequently as can be seen from the following table.

Table 10. A comparison of periods for watering various types of animals during the dry season

Animal	Period of watering
Cattle	each second day
Goats	each second day
Donkeys	each second day
Horses	each second day
Sheep	each fifth day
Camels	each seventh day

Another limitation for the breeding of camel and sheep in the southern zone is created by the unfavourable conditions during the rainy season (mainly mud and flies).

According to some of my informants the southward migration is not an entirely new phenomenon for the people of northern Darfur. They used to migrate to the south in years of famine, for the duration of the dry season only. They could remember only two famines during their lifetimes (in addition to the present one). These took place in 1914 and 1942 and the people remember them with the names Jooli and Beri Beré respectively. Each lasted for approximately two years.

The problem with the present drought is that it has lasted for a long time (since the late 1960's). Moreover

conditions are made worse by the phenomenon of desertification. This has evidently resulted in an increased investment in livestock since animals can be moved to where there is water and pasture but fields cannot be moved.

The claim is therefore made that under the current conditions "pastoralism" is fast moving into the agricultural zone.[1] This change in the ecological niches is therefore expected to result in social change as well. For our current problem this implies a change in the pattern of interaction between ethnic groups, their boundaries and the ways in which ethnic identities are projected. All these points we have to deal with later, but let us here consider more closely the pattern of transhumance.

Again, the general pattern of the two way movement mentioned earlier about the Zaghawa applies generally to the 'Dor" situation. This pattern is mainly created by the polarization of water and grazing resources and partly by the need to keep animals away from cultivated areas. As for the first reason, its logic is clear and simple; areas near water sources become rapidly over-grazed while areas far away have plenty of pasture. Water represents a constant problem in the latter case. Animals are also grouped into two categories for purposes of grazing, watering and management; camels and sheep are one category while cattle and goats are the other. Horses and donkeys

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1. Professor Mensching (personal communication) and my own observations confirm this.

also belong to the last category; the first are used as mounting animals and the second as mounting as well as burden animals.

Now let us examine the "migratory" cycle for both categories/groups of animals.

Cattle and goats, traditionally the most popular animals there, are kept in or near the village. They are looked after by children and adults, mainly women, who help by watering and milking them. During the rainy season (khareef), children take these animals to graze away from cultivated land and they drink from open pools. The adult members of the household engage in agricultural activities which make the highest demand in this period of the year.

After the rains stop and the crops are harvested (darat) the animals are taken to graze the fodder in the fields. By the end of November all the pastures around the villages become over-grazed. Cattle and goats are then taken to dry season camps, "farīk", in the neighbouring dars of Furnung and Siraif. The people of Dor central and Sayé in particular take their animals to the vicinity of Funu on the Furnung/Siraif border. The young herders are accompanied by an adult this time. Sometimes an adult woman may stay with the young herders (if there is an adult male neighbour) and a male member of the household visits them occasionally. For reasons of security and general co-operation people camp in groups (near each other). It is therefore important when planning a dry

season camp to consider factors of solidarity between the people who stay together. This can range from affinal bonds or filiational relationship to community membership.

This seasonal pattern of southward migration is relatively new and is a result of the current environmental crisis that threatens the whole of the northern zone. But previously dry season migration for cattle and goats used to be directed northwards to the vicinity of Kharban. Animals were then watered in Disa or Dor wells. It is a decade now since this pattern has been altered and it looks as if it is irreversible now (at least not in the near future).

As for the other group of animals -- camels and sheep -- a different pattern of migration is adopted. The transitional period between saif and khareef (after the first rains) is called rushash. This is especially promising for the herders because many shrubs and bushes start to rejuvenate at the first signs of humidity. Animals can graze on this until the new grass is out. As pastures usually run out before the end of the dry season the rushash is of special significance for the herds. Paradoxically for the cultivators this is a risky period in their agricultural cycle. For if the first rain is few and is followed by a gap, it will mean the destruction of the seeds which have been sown in dry and this can mean a lot for a poor family with limited grain.

With rushash, herders take their animals to the Qoz and stay around until October. They visit Kharban, Gumgum, Qoz-Nay, Koru-Hay, Kharra, Khurr and Jebel Jak. During this period the animals drink from pools or tumada. These water sources start to run out by October. The herders then take their animals either further north to Jebel Imam or southwards to Jebel Kharban. In the latter case the animals are periodically watered at the wells of Iz-al-Khadim, Disa and Fuguma along wadi Fuguma in the Disa area. In the former case animals are watered at Geneik pool which is usually a point of attraction for various pastoral groups in northern Darfur.

When the rains are sufficient to grow the Jizu pastures the herds will continue their northward journey (in November) to the southern edges of the Sahara where they graze until February. They do not drink water during this period because there is none. Even the hersmen themselves depend completely on milk. The animals compensate by eating green plants which are full of water (camels graze different plants from those grazed by sheep).

Afterwards, the herds may spend the saif roaming between Hagar Imam and Kharban or move southwards (as is the current case) into the cultivators' zone. But camels and sheep are not kept in the same places as cattle and goats in their southern migration. They are taken well to the south of meridian 14^{o} north and may even reach the edges of Jebel Marra. If the previous year was a bad one they may not begin the journey northwards until

the first rains have caused the shrubs to rejuvenate. In this case they spend the rushash between Sayé and Dor where the mountainous area secures browsing shrubs.

The southward migration of camels and sheep has occurred only in the present circumstances and the herders still try to resist it. The fact that the Jizu still offers winter grazing enables them to extend their northern journey and many spend the dry season in northern Sueini. In comparison cattle herds are no longer taken to the north. In fact informants told me that this has ceased since ten years ago.

Another point of comparison between the two groups of animals is that there is enough evidence (from the accounts of local people) to suggest that while the number of cattle in "Dor" has decreased significantly there has been an increase in the numbers of camels, sheep and goats. This is a direct result of the drought because these latter animals are more adaptive to this condition. On the other hand, cattle survive only where cultivation can be practised (because of the amount of water and type of grass they need). Successful people in "Dor" therefore tend to invest in camels, sheep and goats in order to avoid the predicament of having to migrate to the south and this resulted in an increase in the number of these animals.

But, despite the importance of animal husbandry in "Dor" as can be judged from the above presentation, it would be a misrepresentation to call it a "pastoral society"

because the proportion of the households that own full herds is relatively small.

Markets

In Chapter II I have argued that the Darfur Sultanate supported the trans-Saharan trade. That very activity was an important factor in the political administration of Dar Zaghawa in general and Sueini in particular (see Chapter V). But despite all this, there were only thirteen local markets in the Dars surrounding Kutum when the colonial administration took over Darfur in 1916. The reason is not difficult to find, mainly that trans-Saharan trade was concerned with the exchange of luxury goods for the élite. With the exception of ostrich feathers, the rest of the goods sold by the Darfurians were not home produced. Slaves and ivory were collected as a result of raids into the northern territories of Bahr al-Gazal.

In contrast to the external trade, the internal trade was more balanced and depended on the facts of symbiosis between different ecological zones (see Chapter II). These were easily administered in the villages and there was no need for market places. Furthermore, the very limited use of coinage meant that the majority of exchanges had to be done through barter.[1]

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1. Ali Dinar, the last sultan of Darfur, is reported to have had introduced a general-purpose money in the form of coins made of brass, but one can still assume that the coinage had a limited circulation.

The colonial administration, as elsewhere, introduced a general-purpose money, a tax system and manufactured goods. All three innovations facilitated the growth and expansion of local village market-places.

As for the people of "Dor", they frequent about six markets (three of which are located outside Sueini). These markets operate on a rotational manner. Each has one meeting day in the week (two in the case of Disa), as appears in the table below. This is because people may not be able to purchase or sell all their goods in one market.

Table 11. Popular markets in and around "Dor"

Market	Territory	Meeting Day
Disa	Sueini	Friday/ Tuesday
Dor	Sueini	Monday
Absairé	Sueini	Wednesday
Furuk	Furuk	Friday
Funu	Furnung	Monday
Um-Marahik	Artag	Wednesday

The distances between these markets are relatively shorter so that people attending them usually manage to return to their villages on the same day (see Map No. 5). But the people in "Dor" do not limit themselves to these

markets only. Manufactured goods, for example, are brought from Kutum by local traders. Likewise many men travel to Jebel Si and Jebel Marra to bring grain and other kinds of agricultural produce. But the number of people involved in travelling to far away markets is small. For the majority of population (especially women) they visit the local markets for their needs.

Although there is no strict "division of labour" between the local markets, nevertheless a pattern can be seen to emerge from the distribution of the exchange of certain goods. In general, people go to the markets of Furuk, Funu and Absairé when they need to purchase grain. In contrast, they go to Disa and Dor when they want to buy or sell animals. Only traders and tailors from Dor go to Um-Marakik market.

Thus the function of the market place from the economic point of view is to facilitate exchange of goods between people. The goods fall into four main categories, agricultural produce, animals and animal produce, manufactured goods and craftsmanship (blacksmiths, shoemakers, leathercrafts and tailors).

Physically, the market place (sūk) is a group of shady trees situated at the banks of a wadi (often near permanent water sources). Additional shades are built from straw, mainly for the use of petty traders. Women occupy the centre area of the market and are surrounded by the shades of petty traders, tailors and craftsmen in the shape of a circle. A butchery is often situated

several meters away from the centre. Likewise, blacksmiths, women selling beer, the haymarket, the animal market are all situated away from the centre at convenient distances.

Both sexes have the freedom to move in different areas of the sūk except that men are not supposed to go to the women's area. If somebody wants to talk to his wife, for example, he has to ask any woman he may meet outside the women's area to call her for him.

The sūk also plays an important social role as a meeting-place for villagers. News of different social occasions (marriages, circumcisions, deaths, work parties etc.) and invitations are all communicated through the sūk. In short, it is a forum for social interaction.

But the sūk is not simply the sum total of economic transactions and the social role it plays. More than this, it reflects the ethnic composition of the population attending it and participating in these transactions. Let us take the example of the Dor sūk to illustrate this point. As one moves from south to north across the sūk one can notice three zones of language use corresponding to Fur, Arabic and Zaghawa respectively.

Although Arabic is freely used everywhere in the sūk, the above pattern of language use results from the application of three principles:

1. If two persons from the same group interact with each other, they speak in their "own" ethnic language.

2. If the interacting persons could not identify each other or do not know each other's language, they speak in Arabic.

3. If one of them knows the ethnic language of the other, he/she speaks it with him/her.

This pattern of language use also corresponds with the distribution of different ethnic groups in different parts of the sūk. It also corresponds with the direction from which each group comes to the market place (the Zaghawa come from the north, the Fur from the south, the Berti from the east). Interestingly enough, people from the "Dor" belt occupy the middle part of the sūk. No doubt the geographical factor plays an important part in creating this pattern of distribution for members of different ethnic groups. But, the important point to be noticed here is that language is used as a criterion for defining ethnic groups in the sūk situation. I shall elucidate this point later in Chapter VIII. Perhaps I should note here that I have noticed the same pattern operating in the markets of Disa and Absairé.

Another interesting observation with regard to the sūk of Dor is the operation of what may loosely be termed "ethnic division of labour". The leathercraft market is monopolized by the Berti of Turé. The butchery is dominated by the people of "Dor" although the Berti of Turé are well represented. In contrast, the Zaghawa never associate themselves with butchering or leather trade. It is interesting to know that there is no

butchery at all in the market of Um-Marakik which is located in exclusive Zaghawa territories. As a matter of fact the Zaghawa do not consume much meat although they are well-known as livestock breeders. In contrast the Fur consume more meat than they can produce. I have noticed that the numbers of animals killed in Furuk market exceed that killed in Dor, Disa or Absairé, not to mention Um-Marakik. This despite the fact that the sūk of Furuk is smaller than either Dor or Disa.

Further examples of "ethnic division of labour" in the sūk of Dor are the domination of livestock market by the Zaghawa and the grain market by the Fur and Tunjur. The blacksmiths are an exclusive Zaghawa group.(1) Petty traders mostly come from the "Dor" belt and Furuk.

A full analysis of the patterns of ethnic specialization in all the markets in the area will require the supply of comparative statistical data to support such arguments. As it is not possible for me to do so here, my aim in the above discussion is to establish the relationship between the pattern of ethnic specialization in the sūk and the wider structure of economic interdependence in the whole of northern Darfur.

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What I have tried to do in this chapter is to give an overall picture of the "economic system" in "Dor".

I first started by considering how the most important resource - land - is distributed. It appeared that

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1. The blacksmiths are treated as outcasts by the majority of the Zaghawa. They live in villages of their own and cannot intermarry with other Zaghawa.

usufruct rights over cultivated land is the principle on which communal ownership is based. Residence seems to be the effective factor in limiting access to such land. Grazing land is free for all to use.

The organization of labour, the key factor in any economic system, reflects elements of both the Fur and Zaghawa systems but with more similarities with the latter. This is because pastoral transhumance, which is on the increase, requires special arrangements of labour supply between members of a household. While they pool their efforts in managing their livestock, they usually break into separate management/production units in relation to agricultural activities. Otherwise, the practice of communal co-operation, which is the norm all over Darfur, is also in evidence here.

The two important forms of economic activities (cultivation and animal husbandry) have been discussed separately. One important conclusion I have arrived at is that the present drought has been instrumental in changing the balance in favour of pastoral transhumance. The agricultural sector is on the decline both because many people have migrated to the south and those who remained are investing more in livestock. Ecology is playing a major role in initiating social change in "Dor".

Finally, a brief survey of social interaction in market places has enabled us to discover the traditional patterns of economic interdependence between various ethnic

groups. This also seems to coincide broadly with the way in which ethnic groups are defined. The pattern of language use in the sūk shows that language is used here as a criterion of ethnic identification.

In conclusion, the discussion in this chapter has shown that ethnic group relations are considerably influenced by economic factors.

CHAPTER VII

DESCENT, CO-RESIDENCE AND INTERMARRIAGE

The aim of this chapter is to discuss three important aspects of social organization in "Dor" (descent, residence and intermarriage) with the aim of establishing the evidence for social integration of different ethnic groups in the area. Against this view stands all the evidence of ethnic differentiation, some of which we have dealt with in the previous chapters. It is my view that there is no contradiction between the two pictures and that the whole situation is intelligible and can be explained by the use of the concept of "situation". This discussion will be promoted in the next chapter.

With regard to the topics under discussion in this chapter, I would like to make a note at this early stage, which is that all communities in "Dor" are ethnically heterogeneous but they share the same normative principles regarding social institutions. I shall therefore direct the discussion more generally and refer to specific ethnic groups only when variations make it necessary.

Descent groups and local communities

Like most places in Darfur, descent is traced patrilineally in "Dor". This is symbolized by the analogy "the father is the bone and the mother is the flesh", indicating

the superiority of patrilineal descent over matrilineal descent. However, not many people can trace their genealogies more than three generations back. More comprehensive knowledge of genealogy is found with the few traditionally educated "Fugara" (sing. faki) who may learn it by heart. In the case of their own families or other important families they even write them on paper. As it is, such information cannot be trusted beyond certain limits (usually clan ancestry or nine generations).

Patrilineal genealogy is all important for individuals here because it is the person's first identity. Ideally and legally, a person's full name is composed of his/her own name plus his/her father's and his/her grandfather's names. If the first three names of two persons are identical, the names of their second grandfathers are added in order to distinguish them. Apart from this "identity" aspect, genealogy is also used in order to distinguish agnatic kin from uterine kin. The first "ubahāt" (Arabic, fathers) include father's brothers, sisters and their offspring. The second group, "khuwal" (Arabic, mother's brothers) include all relatives on the mother's side.

Neither of the two categories of kin constitute a group in the full sense of the word, because most kinship references are ego-centred. Moreover, bilateral descent is also the basis for inheritance of property other than land. That is done strictly according to Islamic laws of inheritance. These are too complicated to be discussed

here beyond general statements. An important point to make is that inheritance is limited to members of an extended family, who inherit according to their relative position to the deceased. Only siblings of the same sex may have the same status in inheritance. If, however, a person dies without leaving any member of his extended family a distant relative may inherit the property.

Inheritance of office and land is subject to customary practices. Only a male member of one's extended family can be heir to such a position. Because consent of the members of the community is also necessary, sometimes a brother may be preferred to a son as an heir. Such offices include leadership of the dar (which is restricted to the royal Kaitinga family), omodiya, village shaikhship and the title of land ownership, sid al-hakura. Patrilineal descent is therefore not the only factor that determines succession to leadership positions. The ambitious candidate must be able to convince members of the local community of his ability to fill the office. However, the office of the chief of Sueini has always been filled according to the principle of patrilineal inheritance. This is exemplified by the succession of the present chief. His father was dismissed by the British District Commissioner in 1936 as a result of his failure to control some local disputes in the northern part of Sueini. Although some people objected to the appointment of his young son, Adam, on the basis that the latter's mother is a Zaghawa Kobé, his appointment was finally confirmed and Khalifa Ali (his

uncle) was appointed his patron to administer the dar until the new chief was old enough to assume his responsibilities.

It would be true to say that the extended family is the only corporate group based on kinship principles. The role of the extended family, as a domestic group, in the organization of economic activities confirms this conclusion. We have already discussed that in the previous chapter.

The next larger kinship grouping after the extended family is the ahal . This ego-centred group includes relatives on both sides,i.e. ubahāt and khuwāl. The principle of bilateral kinship makes the ahal different for each individual in society, except full siblings. Ideally the recognition of the group is based on the principle of mutual support in times of need. This ranges from co-operation in daily domestic activities to payment of diya (blood-money) in cases of feud. However the co-operation of the entire ahal remains an ideal, with many practical considerations modifying this ideal picture. Residence, affinal relations, economic considerations and disputes are but a few of the factors involved.

If we take the first one, for example, it is easy to imagine that with any type of residence rule applied at least one spouse in an elementary family composed of a couple from different villages, is effectively cut off from some of his/her ahal (the family of orientation in this case). Many forms of daily co-operation depend critically on residential proximity. The conclusion is that only those ahal who actually reside with the ego or

in a nearby village can actually reciprocate their kinship obligations.

Alternatively, those ahal who live away from each other may participate in life-cycle occasions such as birth, circumcision, long-term illness, marriage and death. Interaction on such occasions is usually heavily interwoven with rituals. Symbolically it reinforces the unity of the group. With deaths, for example, a dead person's body may not be buried until all his relatives (ahal) within half a day's walk have arrived. As a matter of fact death is the only likely occasion that brings all the ahal of a person together at the same time. Other occasions do less so according to their importance. Again even the participation of ahal in life-cycle occasions is affected by pragmatic considerations such as those referred to above. Thus it may be right to say that it is not the existence of the normative principles that determines the relationship with one's ahal but these other considerations which vary according to each single situation.

A much larger "kinship" group is the clan (gabīla). The same word is sometimes used to designate the whole ethnic group (e.g. Zaghawa). Ideally a clan is a unit whose members are descended from a common ancestor. Theoretically speaking the clans that make up a single ethnic group are also supposed to be genealogically related. In practice no attempt is made to establish such a relationship except in a few cases. Thus five main Zaghawa clans claim to be the descendants of Mohammad

al-Barnawi. These are: Agaba, Awlad Dégain, Awlad Dawre, Awlad Kadaw and Awlad Nugé. The paradox is that although the Zaghawa society shows clear patrilineal bias, we are told that the last two clans of the five mentioned above are descendants of Barnawi's daughters Kadaw and Nugé. Unilineal kinship laws seem to be subjected to political reality rather than applied "blindly".

Even at the individual level, many people now profess membership of clans other than that of their father's. A concrete example from Dor village is that of the "children of Adam Othman" who are now Kaitinga. For many months of my stay in Dor I had considered them Kaitinga on their father's side until I visited their camel camp where I discovered that they put the Biryara wasim on their camels (the Biryara is a section of Bideyat). After investigation I found out that their father was a Bideyat who stayed with the Kaitinga royal family and was married to the sister of the present chief. As time went by people forgot his background and now his offspring are treated as full Kaitinga.

As it appears today, clans are reference groups used for political purposes. Because clans are not territorial units, membership by itself does not entitle anybody to any kind of rights. On the contrary, political and other relationships can be solidified by invoking clan membership. The only potentiality for joint action of the entire membership is in cases of diya. This seems to be the symbolic ritual for the unity of the clan. Otherwise,

political action is mainly directed through community membership. This is a fairly common pattern in Darfur. Ladislav Holy has noticed this among the Berti as is clear from his statement:

> Individuals may also change their lineage membership as a result of their behaviour in diya relations. Just as alien ethnic groups merge with a Berti village by paying diya with it, so individuals come to be considered members of a lineage to which they had not belonged by paying diya with it. Within maximal lineages the awareness of genealogical ties is vague and it is not difficult to understand how sharing in such activity may fully incorporate individuals into an alien group. (Holy, 1974:168)

The above statement applies to the "Dor" situation as well. It seems to me that residence is not only a modifying factor for the application of kinship principles but also there has been an evolution from groups based on kinship to groups based on local community membership. This is reflected in the high degree of ethnic co-residence that has been achieved. In the next section I shall discuss the patterns and significance of co-residence and the argument will be substantiated with results of a household survey.

Another important factor which has altered the structure of kinship groups in the area is marriage. Intermarriage between different ethnic groups is so common in "Dor" that when it is combined with bilateral descent it is bound to affect the unity of any kinship group; that is by making it non-exclusive and non-corporate.

This factor I shall also discuss at the end of the present chapter, but I wish to consider the matter of co-residence in the following section.

Co-residence

In the last section I have noted that residence is an important contributing factor to social organization both in the way in which it modifies the function of ahal and as the basic mechanism for the incorporation of "strangers" into the community. Let us here consider more closely the relationship between residence and ethnic heterogeneity.

The history of settlement in this area is yet unknown beyond the generalization that large agricultural communities existed here a long time before the beginning of the Keira rule in the 17th century. Traces of stone houses, especially those linked with the trade routes, can still be seen near Dor and Disa. From the account that the people give about the history of existing villages, it is clear that village sites have been frequently changed in the past. These range from Guré which was established in the late 19th century (during the Mahdiya) to Disa Ibrahim which is only 18 years old. Thus the villages of "Dor" belt differ in the size of their populations and the length of time that each of them has been occupied.

But before exploring the reasons for and implications of this variation it may be useful to give some idea about the ~~composition~~ population of these villages with regard to their

ethnic composition. For this purpose, a survey was conducted by myself (with the help of two students from the area) which focused on interviewing a selected number of married men, who represented their households. The questions mainly concentrated on revealing the underlying patterns of ethnic co-residence and inter-marriage plus the rate at which people change their residence (for the survey card see Appendix). From an estimated total of 489 households that occupy the 23 villages mentioned in Chapter V, the heads of 126 households have been interviewed (25.8%).[1]

The principal classification of the respondants by area and ethnic group (Table No. 12) shows a considerable degree of heterogeneity. It should, perhaps, be added that this is so even at village level. The table also shows a clear Tunjur and Zaghawa majority with Kaitinga, Seinga, Berti and Fur following respectively. As a matter of fact these are the major ethnic groups associated with the area as any informant from "Dor" and adjacent areas will say. Of the three areas represented in the survey Dor central is outstanding for the degree of its ethnic heterogeneity. This may be explained by its administrative position and the fact that the sample from it is slightly higher than the average (32.8%).

The existing pattern of ethnic heterogeneity is partially caused by a high degree of mobility which is

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1. See Appendix for more tables.

Table 12. Classification of Respondants by area and ethnic group

ETHNIC GROUP	A R E A			
	Sayé	Dor	Disa	Total
Zaghawa	11	9	13	33
Fur	2	2		4
Tunjur	21	7	24	52
Kaitinga	1	9	5	15
Seinga		7		7
Berti		1	5	6
Jawámá	1		2	3
A. Tako		2		2
Masálít		1	1	2
Jallaba		2		2
TOTAL	36	40	50	126

Table 13. Classification of respondants by present place of residence and place of birth

PRESENT PLACE OF RESIDENCE	PLACE OF BIRTH											
	Sayé	Dor	Turé	Disa	Qoz	Um Shidik	Zaghawa North	Fur South	Dar Said	Total	No. of those who changed their birth-places	Percentage
Sayé	25	3				2		5	1	36	11	30.5
Dor		28	3		3	3	1	2		40	12	30.0
Disa			1	41	3			4	1	50	9	18.0

Table 14. Degrees of first and second movements for heads of households in Sayé, Dor and Disa

FIRST MOVEMENT

AREA	Number of persons for each type of movement					Total
	Far Region	Far Community	Neighbouring Communities	Within Community	Not Moved	
Sayé			11	5	20	36
Dor	3		11	11	15	40
Disa	1		6	17	26	50

Percentage of persons who changed residences for the first time: 51.6

SECOND MOVEMENT

Sayé			1	1	34	36
Dor		2	2	3	33	40
Disa			2	4	44	50

Percentage of persons who changed residences for the second time: 11.9

also reflected by the census figures. Table No. 13 shows the existence of a considerable population movement between the "Dor" belt and adjacent areas. The percentages of this influx are reasonably high (30.5%, 30% and 18% for Sayé, Dor and Disa respectively). The percentage for Disa area is noticeably low by comparison with the other two areas. This is probably due to the high population density in Disa which makes it less attractive for people to move there because they will be faced with shortages in agricultural land.

Going back to the general question of population mobility I would argue that this could be accounted for in terms of two factors. Firstly, some movements are probably due to marriage contracts where the husband, for different reasons, is led to reside uxorilocally. This factor is also interrelated with the second one. The second factor which influences population movement from outside the "Dor" belt is an economic one. There is a tendency for a two way movement between the pastoralist and cultivator zones which is due to what Haaland (1969) calls "strategic value management". I shall return to this point shortly.

The survey also showed a considerable degree of mobility of residences during the lifetime of individual heads of households. Some 51.6% of the respondants have changed their residences once and out of the total number 11.9% have moved twice (Table No. 14). The majority of the cases of movements seem to be within the same

community (i.e. changing villages) or between neighbouring communities (for example between Sayé and Dor). The explanation of such mobility could be sought in two factors.

First there is a tendency for "fission" to take place in old villages (as shown by the variation in their ages). Thus, according to informants, the large village of Guré broke from Arigirgo (a largely Berti village near Turé) towards the end of the 19th century. It attracted people from various ethnic groups (Zaghawa, Tunjur, Kaitinga) and grew into one of the largest villages in the whole of the "Dor" belt; this was possible because of the vast plains surrounding it which facilitated agricultural and grazing land. Later, when population pressure increased demand on land several villages branched from Guré (mainly Gafaina, Kwaira and Medel). Despite this, with more than two hundred huts, Guré is still the second largest village (after Goz Laban) in the whole of the transitional belt.

The "fission" of villages results from the effect of population increase. As the majority of the people are cultivators the pressure on land also increases. Inevitably, it reaches the point where some people have to cultivate fields far away from where they stay. The risks of managing such fields increase as the owners will spend more energy and time to walk to their plots and it becomes difficult to guard them from stray animals. Some households used to stay in small huts at the site of

the fields for the period of peak agricultural work (a rainy season camp). This may eventually lead to the establishment of a small village which is recognized as a part of the parent village. If the site is prominent in terms of cultivable and grazing land, other people may join. Such a process will eventually lead to the formation of an independent village. I have already referred to such an example in Chapter III (the village of Tenfere).

A typical example of a village undergoing such a process in the "Dor" belt is the village of Danga, south of Disa. The village was founded by three households in 1960. They wanted to stay nearer to their dry season gardens at the banks of wadi Fuguma. At the same time they established new millet fields near the village. Although the original founders have since rejoined large villages, Danga is still permanently occupied by four households. Village "fission" is therefore a logical response to economic factors articulated by the natural process of population increase. It has very little to do with political realities or the "classical" segmentary lineage structure.

The second factor that influences village "fission" is related to the aforementioned fact of mobility from the agricultural sector to the pastoral one (or more precisely a result of one's successful investment in livestock). Although every household owns animals of one kind or another, very few of them own large numbers. For such people, staying in a large village means a regression or

a situation of no-increase. Besides the obvious fact of lack of grazing facilities near the village, the owners themselves do not find much time to look after their animals since they are always partially involved in the activities of some other households in the village (this being made necessary by the principle of co-operation between members of a local community).

A person in such a position may decide to leave the village and live in a permanent "camp", usually near his millet field, in order to look after his animals. It can be argued here that such a person may risk losing the communal help that he gets if he stays in the main village. Such an argument is quite true, but leaving the village has its advantages that can outweigh its disadvantages.

The village of Garbogali is a typical example of a village that started as a "camp". The founder, Faki Mohammad is the influential Tunjur leader whom I have referred to earlier (Chapter V). He had moved from Hillat Qoz in the mid 1950's to a site about four miles north-west of the village where he built permanent huts to look after his animals (cows, sheep, goats). His camp is also near the fields of his three households. Later he was joined by his cousin Abdalla and a Seinga man from Korabery. Now there are altogether four married men in the village (one of them is Faki Mohammad's son-in-law). Abdalla, the faki's cousin, also married the sister of the Seinga man.

In the case of this village, its inhabitants maintained permanent daily contacts with their village of

origin because they share the same wells and their millet fields are in the same area. More importantly the physical proximity of the main village is quite convenient to enable the inhabitants of Gargogali to carry on most of their duties of communal co-operation with the rest of the villagers (e.g. house-building, work parties during the agricultural season and death and religious rituals).

One may ask why is it that the village has not grown much since the late 1950's. The answer is that the potential for expansion, in relation to natural resources, is limited because the village is now surrounded by fields from three directions. Nevertheless similar small villages are now scattered along the same wadi on which Garbogali is situated. There are three other such villages. All four are referred to collectively by the name Matila (Fur, wadis).

Now that the relationship between ethnic heterogeneity and co-residence has been established an important question has to be answered; what are the main factors that created this pattern? Three main factors, some of which we have already dealt with, can be isolated here.

Firstly, the historical factor, which is in itself a multitude of factors, has created a political structure in the area whereby the central authority (Sultan) had secured his interests in the area (Dar Zaghawa in general) by introducing a new ethnic element, "Kaitinga", who helped in the administration of the area. This has increased the heterogeneity of the population by dissolving the

authority of clans over territories. Hence it became possible for anybody to gain access to land (agricultural or grazing) without necessarily being a member of a localized descent group. Population mobility therefore increased which in turn affected the pattern of ethnic co-residence. The historical background of Darfur in general and "Dor" (Sueini) in particular has already been dealt with in Chapters II and V respectively.

Secondly, a certain degree of influence has probably been exerted by ecological/economic factors. As I have mentioned above, and in agreement with Haaland's argument, there is a tendency for failures to move from the pastoralist zone into the agriculturalist zone. This being counter-opposed by the tendency of successful investors in livestock from the agriculturalist zone to move gradually into the pastoralist zone in order to increase the return from their investments. As the transitional zone is the meeting ground for such traffic, it is not difficult to see how this can increase ethnic heterogeneity in local communities. Although the current drought problem has accelerated long-distance migration processes, some people have moved only from the Qoz area of Sueini into the "Dor" belt. At present three families in Dor village alone belong to this category. They have established themselves in the village for four years now.

By and large, the ecological factor had the greatest influence, after the political factor, in shaping the population of this part of the Sudanic belt. Some

droughts in the past caused people to move southwards, pushing other people further south. Such a process in the past had its political complexities as well, resulting, maybe, in the success and failure of ruling dynasties. To explain this point on the ecological factor I would say that it has always operated at two levels. The first level, a macro one, is generated by big climatic changes that result in droughts/famines and causes people to seek refuge in neighbouring more prosperous regions. The second level, micro ,is that which is represented by the responses of particular individuals to the successes and failures of their economic activities and the decisions taken thereafter regarding subsequent strategies.

Thirdly, marriage is also an important factor in creating ethnic heterogeneity. In a society where there are less formal rules regarding choice of marital spouses, one expects to find a considerable degree of intermarriage between members of various ethnic groups that live in the area. The fact that people live in multi-ethnic settlements in which much weight is given to communal membership rather than ethnic origin is seen to be advantageous for a diversified marriage pattern. There is also a feedback process between ethnic heterogeneity and intermarriage as each one tends to influence the other so much so that it is possible to speak of a co-relation between the two. For this reason I shall consider the issue of intermarriage more closely in the light of some statistical evidence later in this chapter.

Before ending the discussion on co-residence it is worthwhile considering its implication for the problem of identity. I have already indicated that descent groups are non-corporate and non-localized. Alternatively, the localized portion of a descent group functions within a complex structure of interpersonal relationships and local community membership. Incidentally, both levels of relationships are referred to by one term, ahal. Its use as a reference for an ego's bilateral kin has been dealt with earlier in this chapter. It remains to be mentioned that all inhabitants of a village are called ahal hillah (Arabic, people of the village). If one is referring to a larger community that embraces several villages, the same word is used plus the name of that community, e.g. ahal Dor or ahal Sayé, meaning people of Dor and people of Sayé respectively.

However, neither of these groups are mutually exclusive as far as particular individuals are concerned. A man may live in the village where his grandfather and his children stay, thus a large number of his genealogical ahal are included in his communal ahal. Such a position is advantageous for many people but it may not suit everybody. It should be emphasized here that no contradiction arises if a person resides away from his ahal because he can reciprocate with his kindred through participation in life-cycle rituals, thus the solidarity of the group is maintained.

All other functions can be fulfilled through communal membership and this is obtained through residence. If some one lives in a village he becomes a member of ahal hillah and eligible to all rights pertaining to that membership. Consequently, his descent group membership or clan membership are irrelevant for that matter.

It has to be noted that while membership in the descent group is "prescribed", membership in a local community is "achieved". The local people themselves are aware of this partial opposition for which they quote the proverb "blood is compelling and co-living is achieved by co-operation." The practical meaning of this proverb is that while one is obliged to recognize a descent relationship, this fact alone does not create co-operation between any two parties. Actually this proverb is the key to understanding many types of social relations in "Dor", including that of ethnic identification, as we shall see in the next chapter. In the previous chapter we have seen how agricultural work and other daily activities are organized on local community basis when extra-domestic labour is needed.

Our account has so far been about what people actually do. One may ask about the existence of normative rules regarding residence arrangements for newly established households. The answer is that a normative rule does exist which stipulates that a man should establish his new household near his father's compound. But this rule is only one of preference and is not obligatory. It is

rather a remnant of the past when descent groups were also territorial units and the question of personal security had overriding importance over all other aspects of a person's social life. Since the establishment of a modern state with elaborate administrative and judicial systems which also ended the function of descent groups as territorial units, it became no longer viable for many individuals to conform to the virilocal rule of residence. It is also significant that inheritance is not associated with residence which makes it less risky to break the rules of residence.

It may look as if this is a case for a discussion of "assimilation". I believe that it is not so because although the people in Dor maintain their ethnic and/or clan identities no particular ethnic group dominates the scene. To put it differently, there is no clear structure of ethnic stratification apart from the occasional prejudice against members of ex-slave families. On joining any local community, the individual does not drop his clan membership and adopt another. He may merely adopt a way of life which is befitting for that community, thus acquiring a new identity in addition to the one he already has. Far from saying that people do change their identities (which is sometimes the case) I argue that the general pattern is that of multiple identities. When a person says that he is an "X" or "Y" it does not mean that he is only "X" or "Y" all the time. It rather means that in the situation where the question has arisen he is an "X" or "Y" but in other situations he may be "X" or "Z".

This question of situational identity will receive more attention in the next chapter. But now I wish to consider another feature of "Dor" which is associated with ethnic heterogeneity: intermarriage.

Intermarriage

The most outstanding contribution to the discussion of marriage policy as a parameter of ethnic group relations has been made by Goody (1969). In a discussion of the integration of ethnic groups through marriage policies in northern Ghana, he argues:

> While there are a number of factors involved in these differences in incorporation, marriage policy is overwhelmingly the most important; for most purposes the situation in north Ghana can be summarized in the proposition that the rate of incorporation (I) varies directly with the rate of out-marriages (OM); that is I = OM. For out-marriage is more than an index of assimilation; it is the main mechanism whereby integration is achieved. (Goody 1969:171-72)

The reason why marriage is singled out as an important factor of integration is because it involves the fusion of the most elementary units of two social systems: the elementary family. The household which results from such a fusion is the basic unit of social organization (having control over the production and distribution of goods). As Goody argued, the role of the family as an effective medium for the transmission of culture (through socialization) is very critical in the case of interethnic relations.

While showing total agreement with Goody's argument (stated in the above quotation), I shall seek to discuss in this section the pattern of out-marriages in "Dor" and to relate this to the general features of this area with special emphasis on the two factors of descent and residence.

I shall begin with a short summary of the normative aspects of marriage. Legally, that is according to Sharia, marriage is regarded as a contract between a man and a woman to live together and establish a family of their own (though it is recognized that they cannot perform the transactions by themselves). Socially, however, people consider marriage to be an agreement between two groups: families. This is reflected in the proverb, "one marries a family and not an individual". Another proverbial saying runs, "If you want to marry Fatima, look at Mohammad." This indicates the importance of the wife's brother.

The two principles (that of individual contract or group agreement) are contradictory only in theory, but in actual life most people manage to reconcile them. This is so perhaps because of the absence of positive rules that restrict the selection of a spouse from a certain group(s). Equally, there is no normative rule that recommends the selection of a spouse from either the village of one's parents or outside it. In short, the classical debate of endogamy and exogamy does not apply here.

I have argued at the beginning of this chapter that descent groups in "Dor", or clans for that matter, cannot be defined in terms of marriage transactions. That is largely due to the absence of normative rules that sanction prescribed marriages. Consequently, the usual definition of African descent groups as exogamous units does not apply to our case.

However, close kin marriages of the preferential types do exist. The common Middle Eastern form (father's brother's daughter's marriage) plus the patrilateral cross-cousin and matrilateral cross-cousin marriages are practised. The matrilateral parallel cousin marriage is uncommon in "Dor" but it is more popular in the Fur areas to the south. In many cases individual families exert pressure on would-be spouses to accept a marriage proposal to a cousin. But it would be a mistake to assume that close marriages are obligatory as such or that people accept it only after pressure is exerted on them. On the contrary, people think that is an ideal thing to marry one's cousin if there is one. Despite this it is difficult to consider close-cousin marriages as a general principle for the purpose of defining the type of marriage rules in this society, mainly because of two reasons.

Firstly, the population composition does not make it possible for everybody to marry a cousin ~~because of the existence of~~ due to infertility in some families and disproportionate representation of sexes in ~~each extended family~~ others. Thus a general principle cannot logically be based on such an irregular criterion.

Secondly, the above problem could have been solved by means of an extension to the category of "cousin" beyond first cousins and to include classificatory cousins. This is completely absent in "Dor" where preferential marriages are arranged for first cousins only.

The "Middle Eastern" preferential marriage has received some attention in anthropological literature, especially in relation to Islamic laws of inheritance (e.g. Barth 1954 and 1973). I cannot go into more detail about this here as this is beyond the scope of my present discussion, but perhaps I should note that the emphasis has been misplaced on Islamic laws of inheritance which operate on bisexual and bilateral basis thereby reducing unilineal extremities.

Another principle which is in operation with regard to selection of spouses favours a transaction between families of the same economic and/or socio-political status. People think that the weaker party to a marriage transaction will lose out to the stronger party. This is largely the feeling of the senior generation who are always responsible for finalizing marriage contracts. For this reason they consider their own interests as well. In a sense, a marriage contract is an alliance between two households. This alliance is characterized by a love/hate relationship because of the desire of each household to influence the future household of the young couple. As I have argued earlier (Chapter VI), competition over the allegiance of the new household grows from the fact that

labour is largely recruited on social basis "co-operation". Kinship relationship (affinal or filiational) is an important criterion for the recruitment of labour or for calling any other form of economic help. This competition will also affect the strategy of residence that the young couple are likely to make. But now we have to look at the statistical distribution in order to get the rest of the picture. Again, the tables have been compiled from the household census cards I have referred to earlier. I should mention here that the responses are for questions about actual marriages and not socio-metric records of preferred marriages.

As is the case with co-residence, a considerable number of interethnic marriages do occur (Table No. 15). The average out-group marriages constitute about 43.6% of our sample. This rather indicates the lack of positive rules that sanction either in-group marriages or out-group marriages. It also supports my earlier statement on this issue. However, a comparison of in-group and out-group marriages for the three areas shows Sayé as having the lowest percentage of out-group marriages (28.6%), followed by Disa (30.8%), then Dor with the highest percentage (64.9%).[1] This difference between Sayé and Disa on one hand and Dor on the other is mainly due to a high number of Tunjur in-group marriages, as is clear from Table No. 15.

The explanation for this, in my opinion, lies in a simple demographic fact. The Tunjur are the most numerous group in "Dor". As a matter of fact, they constitute about

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1. see table no. 16, page 215

Table 15. Classification of marriages from Sayé, Dor and Disa by the ethnic groups of husband and wife

HUSBAND'S ETHNIC GROUP	WIFE'S ETHNIC GROUP												
	Tunjur	Zaghawa	Kaitinga	Seinga	Berti	Fur	Jawama	A. Tako	Masalit	Jallaba	Arabs	Korabery	Others
Tunjur	51	6	5	1	2	4			1	1	2		1
Zaghawa	2	25	10	3	1	2					3	1	
Kaitinga	2	7	11	1									
Seinga	3	4		6	1								
Berti		2			7								
Fur	1	1	1	1	1	1							
Jawama			1				2						
A. Tako		2				1		1					
Masalit			1	1					2				
Jallaba	2	1	1	1					1				

	No.	Percentage
marriages within the group	106	56.4
marriages outside the group	82	43.6
Total	188	100.0

Table 16. Comparison of "in-group" and "out-group" marriages for respondants from Sayé, Dor and Disa

AREA	in-group marriages		out-group marriages		TOTAL
	number	percentage	number	percentage	
Sayé	35	71.4	14	28.6	49
Dor	26	35.1	48	64.9	74
Disa	45	69.2	20	30.8	65
Totals	106	56.4	82	43.6	188

Table 17. Classification of marriages in Sayé, Dor and Disa with respect to proximity of pre-marital residence of the couples

AREA	Number of persons for each type of movement					Total marriages	Total village exogamy	Percentage of village exogamy
	Far Region	Far Community	Between Neighbouring Communities	Within Community	Within village			
Sayé	2	1	17	8	21	49	28	57.1
Dor	6	7	26	22	13	74	61	82.4
Disa	3	3	8	21	30	65	35	53.8
Totals	11	11	51	51	64	188	124	66.0

one-third of the sample (see Table No. 12). They are also more concentrated in Sayé and Disa (21 in the first case and 24 in the second case). Given the fact that people are relatively free to take their marriage partners from any group, one would expect Tunjur-to-Tunjur marriages to be higher because of the composition of the population.

Another significant pattern of marriage in "Dor" is represented in intermarriages between communities of varying geographical proximity (Table No. 17). By and large the pattern of village endogamy and exogamy is similar to that of in-group and out-group marriages, with Dor accounting for the highest percentage of village exogamy (82.4%). Again the relatively low percentage of village exogamy in Sayé (57.1%) and Disa (53.8%) are probably partially due to Tunjur-to-Tunjur marriages. Another reason for this could be the fact that there are larger villages in Sayé and Disa than in Dor (e.g. Guré and Goz Laban). In a large village there is higher probability that a person will find the desired spouse within the village community unless there are imposed restrictions.

If we compare the figures for those who moved their residences (Table No. 14) with the figures for village exogamy (Table No. 17) we find that they broadly match. This probably suggests that uxorilocal residence is more than my informants have suggested. One important significance of this relationship is that this tendency emphasizes more the importance of community membership while at the same time undermining the performance of

descent groups.[1] I shall return to this point again in the next chapter.

I have referred earlier to Goody's argument that ethnic integration varies directly with the rate of out-marriages. It is difficult to prove his equation "1 ≓ OM" on the merits of the figures I have presented here for two reasons. The first relates to the size of the sample. Arguably it is difficult to make strict generalizations from a sample of 126 persons spread over 23 villages. Secondly, there are other factors that enter into the choice of spouses on which I have collected no information. Two factors deserve to be mentioned here. Firstly, it is important to know whether some cases of village exogamy are preferential marriages because evidence shows that many people have kinsmen living in other villages. The second factor to be considered is the comparison betwen the economic backgrounds of the spouses' families of origin. This is important for two reasons. Firstly, people generally prefer to marry from families whose socio-economic position matches their own. When we compare the labour requirements for pursuing agricultural activities with its equivalent in pastoral activities it becomes obvious that marriage is affected by this consideration.

Another reason for concern is the fact that the amount of bridewealth payment differs from a pastoralist to an agriculturalist one. In Dar Zaghawa, for example, bride-wealth varies from 40 cattle in Dar Kobé to 20 cattle in northern Sueini. On the other hand, the Fur in Furuk pay

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1. For more tables, see Appendix.

a bridewealth of 3 to 6 cattle at their marriages. In the "Dor" belt itself the amount varies between 6 to 12 cattle. The actual amount payable at a certain marriage depends on the relative positions of the two families involved.

For the above reasons I find it difficult to venture into further analysis of intermarriage in "Dor". However, it would not be a misjudgement to say that even this preliminary analysis does show the existence of a strong relationship between the rate of ethnic co-residence and interethnic marriage which are reasonably high. This in turn can suggest only one thing; that there is a considerable degree of ethnic integration. This conclusion is further supported by the fact that corporate descent groups are absent in "Dor". At the same time recruitment to most social activities is based on local community membership. I shall elaborate on the relationship of these last two points to ethnic identification in the next chapter.

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I started this chapter by examining the role of descent as an organizing principle in "Dor". Two important conclusions emerged from this. I have found that descent groups are non-corporate. This is clear from the way that ahal function as a unit. Apart from ceremonial activities there are few occasions that bring all the members of such a group together. Moreover only those members of ahal who live near each other co-operate in daily activities. This brings us to the second conclusion.

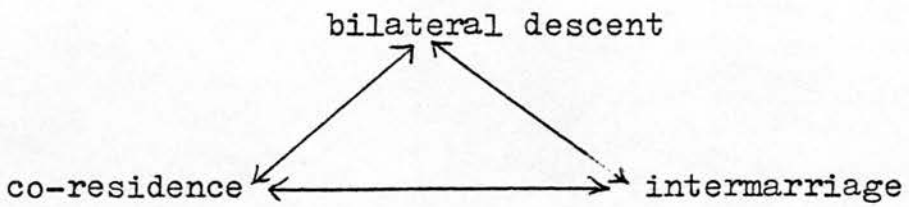
What emerged from the discussion is that local community membership is most important in recruitment to daily social activities. The individual can also gain access to natural resources through his/her membership in a local community (Chapter VI).

The subsequent analysis of the household census figures show a considerably high degree of ethnic co-residence and interethnic marriages. This confirms my conclusion about the role of local community membership as an organizing principle which is, in my opinion, reducing the role of descent in this field.

Another important conclusion that is confirmed by the census figures is the high rate of mobility both within and without the "Dor" belt. I have suggested two factors to explain this trend. First, the limited role of descent in the organization of social activities makes it easier for many men to choose uxorilocal residence. Secondly, the operation of the economic factor at different levels determines in many ways the residence strategies that people adopt. These have been mentioned at earlier stages in this chapter.

I would like to note here that the increasing importance of local community membership should not be seen as a prelude for the disappearance of descent as an organizing principle. In my opinion the role of descent is only being limited to certain sphere of activities and this has been possible because of the bilateral nature of descent in "Dor" society.

In conclusion, I would like to represent the relationships between bilateral descent, ethnic co-residence and interethnic marriage in this way:



So far the evidence from this chapter points to the fact that there is a high degree of ethnic integration. One may wonder why ethnic identification is necessary in such a society or whether the picture given here is false. The point is that the two pictures of ethnic integration and differentiation are not necessarily contradictory.

However the explanation of this apparent contradiction lies in the fact that people distinguish between situations where ethnic identification is relevant and others in which it is not. This situational aspect is the key to understanding ethnic group relations in "Dor". In the following chapter I am going to discuss this concept and explain how it helps us to understand ~~this~~ the state of affairs in "Dor".

CHAPTER VIII

THE DYNAMICS OF ETHNIC IDENTIFICATION AND ETHNIC GROUP RELATIONS

In the preceding chapters I have given an account of the main elements of social organization in "Dor" together with an outline of patterns of life among the Fur and Zaghawa peoples which highlighted (through similarity and contrast) various aspects of life in "Dor". Before that, the broad line of the history of Darfur was spelt out to provide the necessary background for reconstructing the political history of "Dor" later in Chapter V. It was emphasized that any understanding of the "ethnic" problem in "Dor" cannot be achieved without the consideration of the history of Darfur and of the particular developments of Fur and Zaghawa ethnic groups.

Regarding "Dor" itself two pictures emerge; one of which has become apparent and the other remains to be argued in this chapter. To mention the first one, it is clear that from the consideration of economic activities, local community relations and intermarriage a picture of a unified (integrated) group seems to emerge. When we add to this the fact of multilingualism, which is one of the most outstanding characteristics of the area, one is led to believe that the "Korabery" is probably an ethnic group in the making. Yet, as we shall see shortly, ethnic differentiation remains an important fact of life in "Dor".

The people themselves reflect these two pictures of their society by considering themselves sometimes as "all brothers" and at other times as belonging to different "groups".

It is the purpose of this thesis to reconcile the two "seemingly" conflicting pictures of ethnic processes in "Dor". The key assumption behind my argument, is to consider ethnic identity as a "mobile" rather than fixed characteristic of the individual. To express this more accurately, it can be assumed that a person may have more than one identity, each of which is appropriate for his identification in the relevant social contexts. In this case, ethnic identification can be manipulated by the individual actor more or less by changing his/her social context.

The purpose of the present chapter is therefore to draw upon the information already given in the previous chapters, which is of a general nature, and use it to present more close discussions about the nature of ethnic groups in "Dor". I shall also discuss: how these groups are perceived by the people themselves and by their neighbours; what criteria are used for ethnic identification; and how individuals manage to change their identifications or switch between them. These questions will be tackled under three main sub-headings: that of tribes as ethnic groups; the general validity of the Barthian approach; and its special shortcomings in relation to the case under study (as exemplified by Haaland's work). Thereafter I shall propose an amendment which I think will increase the

explanatory value of the Barthian approach (I call this contextual-situational approach).

Tribes as ethnic groups

Until the mid 1960's , historians and social scientists have conveniently used the term "tribe" to refer to groups/communities in non-industrial societies and also for denoting pre-industrial communities in Europe and America. The range of criteria used for the definition of the social unit designated by the word "tribe" ranged from racial traits, language and culture, to religion and political autonomy. The use of one criterion or a combination of them seems to be in some cases arbitrary and in others inspired by the circumstances of the society in question.

An attempt to unify the various definitions of "tribe" culminated in Naroll's controversial essay (Naroll 1964) in which he sets himself the task of redefining "tribe"; conceived of as a culture-bearing unit which he prefers to call "cult unit". He specified six characteristics of such a unit, namely language, political organization, territorial contiguity, ecological adjustment, trait distributions, and local community structure. Of these he arbitrarily chooses the first three to be the criteria for his definition, which is:

> ....a cult unit is defined as a group of people who are domestic speakers of mutually intelligible dialects and who belong to the same state or contiguous contact group. (Naroll 1964:283)

This did not solve the problem for those interested in a precise sociological concept, as is reflected in subsequent criticisms of Naroll (Barth 1969 and Southall 1970).

Another dominant usage of "tribe" is to treat it as basically a political unit. Sahlins has treated it as a stage in his evolutionary scheme of political development, placing the "tribe" between the "band" and the "state" (Sahlins 1961). Unconvinced by this treatment of Sahlins and others Fried argued that the whole issue of classification of stages is a useless pursuit and suggested the study of stratification systems instead, if political developments are to be comprehended. His paper "On the concepts of 'tribe' and 'tribal society'" (Fried 1968), triggered such an interest that the American Ethnological Society made "tribe" the topic of their tenth annual meeting. The papers that were published as a result (Essays on the Problem of Tribe) did not however develop Fried's theme any further (Helm 1968).

Recently, in 1970, the editors of the "Journal of Asian and African Studies" devoted a whole volume to the theme of "the passing of the tribal man". This has been inspired by the problems of political ethnicity which dominated post-colonial African states. The assumption has been made that African societies were "tribal" before the Europeans colonized them, but now that they have come

under the control of modern states "tribalism" is expected to disappear. The resurgence of "tribalism", or its active involvement in the political sphere of "modern" African states has therefore been considered a "pathology" which inhibits political development in these countries. To accommodate this new form of "tribalism" some anthropologists have redefined "tribe". Thus in the same journal Mitchell provides an alternative definition by invoking the concept of culture:

> In these terms a tribe would be a group of people who share a set of cultural characteristics. (Mitchell 1970:84)

Southall tried on his part to discover what is wrong with the concept of "tribe". He notices that whatever arbitrary criteria are used there is bound to be a society where these criteria do not coincide with reference to the same population. He concludes by summarizing the problems raised by the concept of "tribe" in anthropological literature:

> There are three sets of problems associated with the tribal concept as we have examined it: problems of definition (ambiguous, imprecise or conflicting definitions and also the failure to stick to them consistently); problems of illusion (false application of the concept to artificial or misconceived entities) and problems of transition and transformation (use of the concept of tribe unjustifiably with reference to phenomena which are a direct product of modern influence. (Southall 1970:45)

Gutkind agrees with Southall and claims that,

> Tribe has little basis in native society except as a situational construct and for ethno-historical and linguistic mapping by ex-colonial powers and anthropologists. (Gutkind 1970:4)

The exponents of Marxist analysis have considered the problem of "tribe" as a formation of colonialism. Thus Mafeje argues that ;

> I am inclined to think that the problem in Africa is not one of empirically diversified behaviour but mainly one of ideology, and specifically the ideology of "tribalism". European colonialism, like any epoch, brought with it certain ways of reconstructing the African reality. It regarded African societies as particularly tribal. (Mafeje, 1971:253)

Although the contribution of colonial powers to the flourishing of the concept of "tribal society" cannot be denied, yet it is hard to believe that its usage never existed in pre-colonial Africa. Social units of the type called "tribes" did exist, but the problem, as Southall claims, arises from misconceptions about these units. One frequent mistake which is made about pre-colonial societies in Africa is the assumption about their relative isolation. Few people realize that long before Europeans came to Africa many great states flourished on African territories. These states were characterized by more or less centralized authority at the top of a complex system of political organization which broke the isolation of many smaller groups. Moreover, even where the formation of a state was not prominent the isolation of small groups was usually

broken through small-scale interaction across the boundaries of these groups.

An excellent example of a pre-colonial centralized African state is given in Nadel's "A Black Byzantium" (1942). But despite the sophistication of state machinery and relatively developed political and economic institutions, Nadel chooses to identify the Nupe tribe with a core of Nupe culture and gives this definition of tribe:

> Our tautological definition of tribe then reads thus: a tribe or people is a group the members of which claim unity on the grounds of their conception of a specific common culture. (Nadel 1942:17)

Although Nadel was able to realize some of the inherent problems of functionalist anthropology (such as the assumption of a social system in equilibrium), he could only present the Nupe as a "tribal society". This was probably because an alternative approach was not serviceable at the time, as functionalism was in its heyday.

Going back to our own material, I have argued that the formation of the state in Darfur was a major factor in any isolation a certain group might have enjoyed in the last four centuries or so. Consequently, any conception of a "tribal" group which assumes a relative or absolute isolation is a misjudgement of the situation. Rather, the evidence shows that there are no grounds for treating the Fur or the Zaghawa as "tribes" in the general sense employed by most anthropologists. In fact, the statement by Gutkind quoted above pin-points the problem of "tribalism" in Darfur.

Arkell and MacMichael were both historians and colonial administrators whose interest was to delineate "tribal" groups which could form the basis for administration through Indirect Rule. In this they were guided by the assumption that "tribes" are biological types which correspond to cultural/linguistic groups, hence their efforts to produce taxonomies which suited their purposes. MacMichael's extensive classification of northern Sudanese "tribes", on the basis of their genealogies or pedigrees collected from learned men, came to be used as a main reference for defining ethnic groups in this area. Cunnison has pointed out an important inconsistency in this respect. He says:

> It is important also to stress that if any connection exists in terms of real descent between a given tribe and the ancestors it claims, this connection must exist for only a very small part of the population of any tribe. (Cunnison 1971:194)

I have already indicated the existence of this problem in relation to Darfurian "tribes". Cunnison chooses an opposite line of argument to that of MacMichael when he states:

> Whereas MacMichael has stressed the similarity of these genealogies, I would stress their differences, for while the same names are repeated in one version after another, the genealogical relationships of the tribes do not agree. (Cunnison 1971:191).

Furthermore, Cunnison claims that Baggara genealogies are "falsification of the record" and that they are mere "ideologies".

In relation to our material, the legend of Ahmed al-Magur and the claim of his ancestry by various groups (Fur, Tunjur, Kaitinga, Zaghawa) lends support to Cunnison's point of view.

When I first began this study, I did not consider the classification of Fur and Zaghawa as typical "tribes" to be problematic in any way. For I felt that the facts of culture, language and a general sense of origin marked each of them as a stereotype "tribe". What I considered problematic was the identity of the Korabery (the name associated with the people of "Dor"). However, from the start I was convinced that any understanding of the latter group must be in terms of its relationship to its former neighbours and their general place in the history of the region.

To my astonishment I later came to discover that both the Fur and Zaghawa positions are not as consistent as I had first thought they were. As I have shown in Chapters III and IV, the usual criteria of culture, language and territorial contiguity do not coincide for the definition of either group. For example, a group of people who now speak the Fur language and live within Fur territory have a different historical tradition of their origin. The Jawamáa of Turra are believed to be of Arab origin and the main group now lives in Kordofan and Eastern Darfur. The contingent that lives in Turra today had established itself there during the early stages of the Keira Sultanate, when its members were brought there to help in the spreading of

Islam by teaching the new religion. Today they are part and parcel of the Fur community there. Likewise, the Tekera of Tekerabé (otherwise known as Awlad Tako) have managed to establish themselves as part of the Zaghawa community in northwestern Sueini. Their historical traditions link them with the Baggara Rizaygāt of Southern Darfur and elaborate on stories of migration from Arabia.

To give a different example of a sub-group that lives outside the territory of its major ethnic group, I recall once more the case of the Zaghawa of Kagmar (in Kordofan). They have no knowledge of Zaghawa language today and have no affiliation with the Zaghawa of Northern Darfur (cultural or otherwise).

The fact that different criteria for the identification of "tribes" often do not coincide has been acknowledged by other anthropologists such as Nadel (1942), Fried (1968) and Southall (1970), to mention but a few.

I have therefore decided to use the term "ethnic group" to refer to these populations instead of the usual term "tribe". The advantage of the former term comes from the fact that it is flexible and can be applied in almost any situation where allegiance to named groups is mobilized. This can vary from voluntary associations in African towns or groupings in rural areas, to ethnic clubs in the United States of American, and sectarian organizations in Northern Ireland.

The term ethnic, like "tribe", it should be noted, is not free from misuse, for many people still regard it

as synonymous with "race" (most American literature), or as the opposite of "tribe" in industrialized and urban societies. The latter is largely the sense in which pluralist sociologists (like M. G. Smith) have used the term "ethnic." It appears as if we have no option of using a more precise word.

However, I should add that my objection to the word "tribe" is not so much with the derogatory usage that it has been subjected to, as to its failure to offer a useful framework for studying dynamic social processes such as intergroup relations. I would therefore repeat my suggestion that the word ethnic should be adopted more liberally to replace "tribe" and to include other phenomena that are otherwise unaccounted for (e.g. ethnicity in urban situations).

An ethnic group would be a reference group, the members of which are supposed to share common attributes. As Barth has shown such attributes do not necessarily represent the whole range of characteristics exhibited by a certain population nor are they objectively verifiable by necessity. In other words one criterion or attribute might be chosen to signal the identity of a group (e.g. language) at the expense of other criteria, even when the former is not homogeneously applicable to all the members (or sub-groups) to which that identity applies. This point will be clarified in the course of subsequent discussion in the present chapter.

Ecological Factors and Ethnic Processes: The Barthian Approach

The relationship between ideology and environment is a constant theme in anthropological studies, but nowhere is it more clearly illustrated than in Evans-Pritchard's "The Nuer" (1956). When it comes to the conceptual analysis of that relationship, it is the work of Barth that is more prominent. In his various publications on Middle Eastern and Southwest Asian societies, Barth has paid constant attention to the interrelationships between patterns of social organization and the environmental conditions under which they operate.

Of specific interest to our present concern, is his analysis of interdependencies between ethnic groups on the basis of economic specialization and/or ecological adaptations. He borrowed the concept of "niche" from the natural sciences (biology) to refer to positions in the natural environment occupied by an occupational/ethnic group. Thus he considers the investigation of social processes across ethnic boundaries especially important for highlighting the problem of ecological adaptations. In his introduction to "Ethnic Groups and Boundaries" Barth constructs a four-fold typology of forms of ethnic interdependence where a number of them are in close contact. It is useful to quote his statement in full length here:

> (1) They may occupy clearly distinct niches in the natural environment and be in minimal competition for resources. In this case their interdependence will be limited despite /...

.../ co-residence in the area, and the articulation will tend to be mainly through trade, and perhaps in a ceremonial-ritual sector.

(2) They may monopolize separate territories, in which case they are in competition for resources and their articulation will involve politics along the border, and possibly other sectors.

(3) They may provide important goods and services for each other, i.e. occupy reciprocal and therefore different niches but in close interdependence. If they do not articulate very closely in the political sector, this entails a classical symbiotic situation and a variety of possible fields of articulation. If they also compete and articulate through differential monopolization of the means of production, this entails a close political and economic articulation, with open possibilities for other forms of interdependence as well.

These alternatives refer to stable situations. But very commonly, one will also find a fourth main form: where two or more interspersed groups are in fact in at least partial competition within the same niche. With time one would expect one such group to displace the other, or an accommodation involving an increasing complementary and interdependence to develop. (Barth 1969:19-20) (1)

As Barth himself admits, the majority of situations of ethnic interdependence actually resemble mixed types. The typology is therefore bound to be a rigid one. The other reason for its rigidity is the fact that it is largely dependent on one factor; ecological adaptation (or economic factor).

So much for Barth's theoretical position, but on the ethnographic level it is Haaland's study of ethnic processes on the southern boundaries of Fur with Baggara which is specifically relevant for the comparative purposes of the present study. It will therefore be a useful exercise to

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1. The emphasis is mine.

summarize his main arguments and then try to evaluate the applicability of his model to the "Dor" situation.

The main references to Haaland's analysis are his two articles (Haaland 1969 and 1972), which are more or less complementary. In the first article Haaland describes and analyzes the process of ethnic boundary maintenance between the Fur and Baggara cattle nomads in Western Darfur. In the second article he elucidates more on the process of identity change that takes place as a result of some Fur farmers pursuing nomadic careers. The state of affairs between the two ethnic groups approximates to the third type indicated in Barth's typology. Thus, in Haaland's own words;

> The articulation of Fur and Baggara is thus mainly based on the complementarity of goods and services connected with their different subsistence patterns. (Haaland 1969:60)

Haaland asserts that in addition to cultural differences the words Fur and Baggara are characterized by two distinct economic systems, that depend on farming and pastoral nomadism respectively. Thus the ethnic identities of Fur and Baggara are assocaited with different value standards, some of which relate to the evaluation of goods and activities associated with a sedentary versus a nomadic style of life.

Having established the basic categories and forms of activities involved in this cultural/ecological frontier, Haaland then moves on to document and evaluate the feature of "flow of personnel" between Fur and Baggara ethnic

groups, viewing it in terms of contrast between ideology and practice (mainly Haaland 1972).

As I have mentioned earlier, Haaland has noticed a considerable number of Fur farmers adopting pastoral careers and ultimately becoming nomads. Using the basic theoretical assumptions of transactional analysis he argues:

> These careers represent the accumulated result of strategic choices taken with reference to value management. The premises for the choices are the culturally defined goals that one wants to realize (e.g. preferences for special consumption patterns, style of life, prestige, wealth) and the institutional and ecological factors which constitute strategic limitations on the realisation of these goals. (Haaland 1972:158)

The value management mechanisms for Fur farmers operate in an opposite direction to that documented for the Basseri of South Persia by Barth (1964c, cf. 1965a). A successful Fur farmer, Haaland argues, has no chance of reinvesting his savings in farming because the subsistence economy lacks such channels. The basic tools used are hoes and axes, and labour is non-monetized. Moreover the major product, dukhn, is untransferable into cash because of moral restraints (see also Barth 1967a).

Fortunately for such farmers an investment in cattle offers an alternative chance for investment. The existence of the Baggara cattle breeders who visit the Fur country during the dry season makes such investment more feasible because, first they learn herding techniques from them,

and secondly they can entrust their cattle to Baggara friends provided that their numbers are small. However, the critical stage at which a Fur will start to encounter with pastoral nomadism comes when the number of his cows approaches between seven to ten. A contract with a Baggara friend becomes more risky at this stage because the latter is not responsible for lost animals or animals killed by disease or other wild animals. This risk factor poses a dilemma for the farmer whose investment in the pastoral sector is now considerable.

As an alternative solution he may choose to take care of his animals by himself. He first starts short migration routes and when his animals reach between twenty to twenty-five animals the longer migrations of the Baggara can then be adopted. Eventually the new nomad may establish himself as a member of a Baggara camp. According to Haaland this is the time when his Fur identity is dropped and a Baggara identity is assumed. He concludes;

> In this article I have said that a pastoral ideology is neither a necessary condition for the emergence of nomadic careers, nor a sufficient condition for maintenance of such enterprise. Instead I have emphasized how the actors decisions to become nomads or farmers are conditioned by factors determining the profitability of alternative ways of value management. (Haaland 1972:169)

Despite my general agreement with the above statement, I find it difficult to accept the proposition that change in ethnic identities follow the switches in economic careers "automatically". Haaland has denied that his

analysis implies economic reductionism, but I can hardly see that it is not. Fortunately, he makes a comparison with the northern Fur in which he gives the political factor some weight. He says:

> Although, for the welfare of the cattle, it might be preferable for a herd-owner in Dar Furnung to leave his village and move in the Zaghawa area the whole year, this is more risky venture politically, unless he has established relationships to groups that he can trust for support. Marriage with a Zaghawa girl and uxorilocal residence is a mechanism for establishing such relations. (Haaland 1972:162)

In relation to the present material this statement is largely true. It should be added however that the "Zaghawa area" Haaland is referring to is the "Dor" belt itself, for he further explains;

> The occurance of such marriages is widely recognised; thus the population just north of Dar Furnung is called Fora-Merita by the Fur and Kora-Berri by the Zaghawa, both terms meaning Fur-Zaghawa and referring to inter-marriages as well as to the mixed origin of the population there. (Haaland 1972:162)

Again this statement is supported by the material presented in this thesis. When it comes to the question of ethnic identities, however, Haaland makes another sweeping generalization which remains controversial. Still referring to the "Kora-Berri" he states:

> As an ethnic group they may be identified as Zaghawa, since it is according to the standards of this culture that performance is judged and sanctioned. Social life is thus structured with reference to Zaghawa standards and the idioms of Zaghawa culture are used for signalling identity. (Haaland 1972:162)

In the previous chapters I have shown that there is considerable difference in elements of social organization between the Zaghawa and "Dor" belt in areas like domestic organization, division of labour, inheritance and the significance of kinship in local community relations. Economic careers of individual households vary from complete reliance on cultivation to transhumance or full nomadism. The facts of ethnic heterogeneity and cultural variations, including most importantly the language factor, also add to the complexity of the picture. In view of such complexity Haaland's generalization about ethnic identities in "Dor" appear to be simplistic and incapable of explaining the situation. This is mainly because the economic factor has been overemphasized and the political factor (which he acknowledged) was not sufficiently argued. In fact I would suggest that his model cannot easily accommodate factors other than the economic one.

It is clear from his above quoted statements that Haaland refers to the phenomenon of ethnic heterogeneity in "Dor" as evidence of identity switches. According to my own observation, this is not true (see Chapter VII). Furthermore, I would argue that this situation has arisen as a result of political processes in the past as my discussion of the political history of Dar Sueini has shown (see Chapter V).

However, it is not difficult to find examples of individuals or units that have undergone the kind of ethnic processes (identity switches) that Haaland refers to.

Such examples range from the Tumurké[1] of Um-Shidik in northern Sueini to the Tekera of Tekerabé (originally Awlad Tako) who also live in Um-Shidik area and the Berti Awlad Halal (who used to live in Gumé, northeast of Dor). All these sub-groups have been reported to me as Zaghawa not only by their own members but also by other informants of Zaghawa origin.

Examples of switches in the opposite direction are also found. There are many Zaghawa Dangari families living in the village of Algosa in Furuk. They are fully identified with the Fur there with whom they co-reside and freely intermarry.

We now know that ethnic processes have been operating in both directions, but to explain this it is necessary that enquiries are extended beyond the analysis of economic performances to embrace other relevant factors. In this connection, it is important that ethnic histories as well as the general history of the area are reviewed and analysed. My treatment of the Kaitinga in Chapter V is one example.

To move now to a more general discussion, I want to draw attention to the fact that considerable changes have taken place in northern Darfur since the turn of the century. Consequently, one would expect that any assessment of the current ethnic processes in the area must take these changes into account. Again I refer here to the wider context of Fur/Zaghawa relations.

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1. The Tumurké is one of the principal Fur sub-groups (see Chapter III).

Historically both groups used to occupy different niches and had interdependent economies. Although the interdependence still exists, the relationship between them has changed considerably. The present state of affairs can be represented by the fourth situation in Barth's typology, i.e. "interspersed ethnic groups which are in partial competition within the same niche."

Three main factors have brought about the present situation. Firstly, the climatic changes have caused the movement of the boundaries of safe cultivation further south, thereby leaving the people of Furnung, Furuk and Sueini with no option but to try to invest more in livestock, because it is easy to move one's animals to where there is grass and water. The reverse is also true, for many people in Dar Zaghawa have lost their animals and chances for traditional cultivation are virtually non-existent. Consequently these people have to move south to follow the shrinking cultivation belt.

Secondly, a great many of the cases of nomadized Fur who ended up in Zaghawa dars are also due to success stories (as explained by Haaland's model). This has put considerable pressure on grazing. As more people invest in livestock, overgrazing becomes inevitable and tensions grow as a result of competition. The increased commercial demand for livestock in central Sudan and in neighbouring countries (Libya, Egypt and Arabia) only add to this problem by encouraging more investments in this sector. Such a situation is likely to inhibit ethnic processes

rather than enhancing them because competition calls for solidarity. The result is that fewer people will manage to change their identities because the host group will be reluctant to accept their membership.

The third factor which influenced Fur/Zaghawa relations considerably is the political factor. After the fall of the last Fur sultan in 1916 the Zaghawa were no longer dominated by the Fur. Instead they became equals under a supreme administration (the colonial administration and later independent Sudanese governments) which did not want to favour one ethnic group over the other. The Zaghawa trade expanded (first with Egypt, then with Libya) and they became in a position to obtain firearms. In an environment where competition over natural resources (water and grazing) often triggers serious fights, a rifle is an asset to its owner. This is not to forget its importance in guarding one's animals from thieves (a more common risk to livestock owners in northern Darfur than diseases). As a result, the Zaghawa became the most powerful group in northern Darfur and were able to use this power against their pastoralist rivals (mainly Arabs). The Fur were also affected by this change in the power balance and they often found themselves at the receiving end of Zaghawa aggression. This aggression is mainly in the form of livestock stealing which is sometimes seen as a threat to the symbiosis which characterizes the relationship between the two ethnic groups.

In the above paragraphs some factors which influenced the relationship between the Zaghawa and Fur have been identified. These have not been sufficiently accounted for in Haaland's analysis. An even more important consideration regarding the ethnic question in "Dor" slips through Haaland's analysis.

We have seen in the last chapter that the range of ethnic groups represented among the people of Dor include Tunjur, Kaitinga, Berti, Seinga, Jawama, Awlad Tako, Masalit and Jallaba in addition to the main groups of Fur and Zaghawa. Haaland did not consider this, instead he envisaged ethnic processes as being one of choice between two alternative identities: Fur and Zaghawa. As his discussion is not about "Dor" as such, one could not blame him for not mentioning these other minor groups. But the point I am making here is that his model itself imposes the limitation since it is built on the assumption that there are two life styles (that of pastoralism and that of cultivation) associated with two ethnic groups, Fur and Zaghawa.

While the validity of this argument at a certain level cannot be denied, I insist that the picture in "Dor" is only partially represented by such a model. I hold that the definitions of Fur and Zaghawa involve other criteria such as language, territory and genealogy (or stories of origin) in addition to the criteria used by Haaland; occupation (or life style). These criteria do not coincide and the people of "Dor" are aware of this fact, hence they use

them selectively. I shall argue this point in more detail shortly but before that I want to summarize my main criticisms of Haaland and for that matter the Barthian approach.

Firstly Haaland's analysis proceeds with the assumption that the individual can have only one ethnic identity at a time. This is not necessarily true in all cases. As I have argued earlier there is no standard universal list of criteria for the definition of ethnic groups. Consequently, every case must be judged according to its own merits. If the criteria so specified for a given situation do not coincide the possibility is that an overlapping of identities will occur. In such a case many individuals will have access to more than one identity because they can manipulate these criteria. Examples of this are numerous as we shall see later.

Secondly, the emphasis on a single factor analysis (mainly ecological analysis), has the effect of minimizing the role of other criteria that may be relevant in the definition of ethnic groups and the flow of personnel between them. Although the ecological factor is relevant, it can only explain ethnic processes in a situation where two (possibly three) ethnic groups are involved. In such cases ethnic identities are based on polarized ecological adaptations each of which is associated with one ethnic group. Haaland's study of the Southern Fur and Barth's studies of Southwest Asian groups generally conform to this rather unusual picture.

But if their approach is to claim more general validity, it must be useful for the study of situations different to those mentioned above. In "Dor", for instance, the picture of ethnic diversification goes far beyond what Haaland assumed it to be. The simple idea of two ethnic groups corresponding with two ecological niches cannot explain this situation because the facts simply do not add up. How can we account, for example, for the identities of Kaitinga or Seinga in terms of ecological adaptation? There must be more to it than that.

An alternative treatment would be to consider the economic factor as one criterion of ethnic identification which may be relevant in some situations. But, for any given case we must first work out the whole range of criteria that are used as we cannot assume a priori what these criteria are.

Thirdly, the historical dimension is neglected in the Barthian approach. Since ethnic identities change over time (both in terms of individual positions and the characteristics of ethnic groups), a historical dimension should be introduced so that we do not only account for the current circumstances in order to understand ethnic relations but we also get to know how these relations were performed in the past.

Thus Haaland's failure to qualify the effect of the political factor in ethnic group relations in "Dor" can be seen as a direct result of the lack of a historical dimension. Indeed such a factor cannot also be ignored

in the Fur/Baggara case. We know that the Baggara nomads have always been a source of trouble for the Keira sultans. Both the Masālit and Daju who share the environment with the Fur in western Darfur had their own separate sultanates before and during the Keira rule. It is a mistake therefore to ignore such facts of history when one is dealing with ethnic identities because its political dimension is ever present.

An example of the kind of historical dimension I am proposing is given in a recent article by Lovejoy and Baier (1975) who analysed Tuareg and Hausa ethnic relations in the pre-colonial period in the wider context of the regional economy of the Sahel. Using a Barthian framework of analysis, they argue:

> ethnic identification in the sahel and southern Sahara was characterized by a division between farmers and nomad and between Tuareg and Hausa or Kanuri. Hence ecological specialization was at the basis of ethnicity. (Lovejoy and Baier 1975:562)

This makes it a typical case of symbiotic relationship. But the two authors reveal a further level of identification:

> Furthermore, within each cultural division other distinctions were recognized, each of which had a foundation in the relative economic, political and social position of the people involved. (Lovejoy and Baier 1975:562)

The case reported by the two authors for Central Sudan (northern Nigeria and Niger) is considerably different from the case of northern Darfur in that a clear system of

ethnic stratification was evident in the first case. The nomadic Tuareg were in fact at the top of that stratification system and therefore wielded political power to their advantage. The value management analysis suggests that it was the Tuareg who searched for investment outlets outside their sector and invested in commercial activities in the savanna region. This looks more like the case of the Basseri of South Persia (Barth 1964c). Nevertheless the conclusion reached by the authors favours Barth's frameWork of analysis and in my opinion adds a new dimension to it. The whole strategy of their work is best shown in this quotation from their article:

> The relationship of the desert edge to the economy of the Central Sudan demonstrates how flexible ethnicity can be as an organizing principle. In this region ethnic groups have been categories of ascription and identification by and for the people involved, and as such they have organized interaction between people. Identification has been related most specifically to ecological specialization, in which different people exploited distinct niches in the environment and where interaction has been primarily limited to commerce and the maintenance of servile relationships. For the historian, these organizing principles have had the added advantage of assisting in historical reconstruction, not in the simplistic fashion in which the migration myths of whole peoples are often imagined, but rather by considering a regional context which allows for economic change. An understanding of the process which have occurred over the past several centuries can help evaluate the possibilities of recovery from the present drought. Such an analysis must take into account the changing patterns of ethnic identification, for these provide the key to the future as they have to the past.
> (Lovejoy and Baier 1975:580)

If historians are able to make use of anthropological models, there is no reason why anthropologists should not incorporate historical data in their analysis. The usefulness of such a scheme has already been demonstrated in this thesis (see Chapters II and V). There can be no doubt that our understanding of ethnic processes in "Dor" is improved by the incorporation of historical data.

Now that my criticisms of the Barthian approach to ethnic processes have been made clear, I should emphasize again my belief in the potential of his approach, hence the strategy of my work is to suggest ways of improving this approach. I have already suggested that historical data should be incorporated, as I have done so in earlier discussions. I should add that historical investigation must not be restricted to written documents only but oral traditions should be collected from the field as part of research methodology. Of course the tradition of historical investigation has long been accepted in sociological research.(1)

My second suggestion for improving the Barthian approach arises from its rigid conceptualization of ethnic identification, which views the individual as being the member of only one ethnic group, defined in terms of ecological adaptation (or economic performance). It cannot account for this phenomenon in "Dor" because of, to use the words in Lovejoy and Baier's statement, "changing patterns of ethnic identification".

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1. See Evans-Pritchard (1949), Nadel (1942), Leach (1970).

The rest of this chapter will be devoted to discussing this suggestion and to show how the dynamics of ethnic identification in "Dor" actually work.

The Dynamics of Ethnic Identification: a Contextual-Situation Approach

In the previous chapter I discussed the relationship between ecology and ethnicity in the light of the Barthian approach. I there demonstrated the limitations of this approach in relation to the ethnographic situation of "Dor" and suggested how these limitations could be overcome.

I therefore make two suggestions to improve the Barthian approach: firstly, by incorporating historical data from the whole region (Darfur) into the analysis, and secondly, by treating ethnic identification as a multi-dimensional phenomenon. The first point has been dealt with elsewhere in this thesis (Chapters II, V and VIII). In this section I wish to deal with the second point as the major contribution of the thesis to the general topic of ethnicity. But before I proceed in that direction I shall have to emphasize two general ideas regarding ethnicity.

The first point is about the relativistic or hierarchical nature of ethnic entities. In the same way as an individual can be seen as a member of a local community, a larger territorial unit, a region and a state - his ethnic identity can show a similar hierarchical pattern.

The other point concerns the dynamic nature of ethnicity. Following Patterson (1976), I believe there is much to be gained from considering ethnicity, or ethnic identification for that matter, as a dynamic phenomenon. The nature of this dynamism lies in the fact that both the criteria for the identification of ethnic groups and the way in which individual members express their allegiances to these groups change through time and with respect to the circumstances under which such processes take place.

I have already argued that the disadvantage of the Barthian approach (as it was applied by Haaland) is that it produces a more or less static picture of ethnic identities by considering the individual to be a member of only one group, except for permanent changes. But in a situation like that of "Dor" it is extremely difficult to draw a map of ethnic entities and individual allegiances on a permanent basis. A certain individual may be considered a Zaghawa in one context, a Kaitinga in another and a Fur in yet a different context.

How then can we explain such a confusion? So far there is no agreement between scholars as to what constitutes the real substance of ethnic identities (see Freid [1968], Barth [1969] and Southall [1970]). As such we find ourselves unable to decide whether one of the three proposed identities for such a person is "genuine" and the others "false". We cannot favour race over language, or descent over ecological adaptation. They all form possible criteria of ethnic identification, and the list is

inexhaustible. A model of ethnic identification should therefore allow multiplicity of identities as one possible pattern of the organization of ethnic relations. In order to achieve this I suggest a contextual-situational approach to be applied within the Barthian framework.

But first of all it is important to explain what I mean by "contextual-situational". By the word "context" I refer to the natural and social environments which constitute the total field of social relations for members of the group or groups under study. One may argue that this is a first prinicple in social anthropology which does not need to be emphasized. However, the reason for emphasizing it stems from the fact that ethnic relations operate on a wider scale than many anthropologists have implied in their writings. Furthermore, the changes that occur in the wider environment sometimes inversely affect the balance of ethnic group relations in that area. The expansion of the field of investigation to include important elements in the wider environment that I referred to earlier is meant to cater for this need.

Thus, the analysis of ethnic group relations in the "Dor" area will not be complete without the consideration of the wider background of Darfur as a region with its particular environmental features and political history. The special reference to the two ethnic groups, Fur and Zaghawa, is justified by the fact that they occupied important positions in the history of the region and more so in the case of "Dor" which constitutes a transitional zone between the

two groups. Finally the term "context" also includes the critical features of social organization in "Dor" itself (the practice of cultivation and animal husbandry being the most prominent).

It is true that the original Barthian framework includes certain elements from the wider social environment. But it fails to incorporate historical data, the importance of which I have already noted. The emphasis on the contextual aspect of ethnic identity also strengthens the view that "choice" is an important element in the maintenance and change of these identities. However, the above usage of the word "context" allows us to investigate ethnic relations at the macrosociological level only. But the identification of individuals with groups is a microsociological process; as such, reference to individual activities and behaviour becomes necessary for understanding ethnic processes. For this reason I have chosen the word "situational" to refer to individual activities.

The use of the term "situational" in ethnic studies is very much associated with the tradition of the "Manchester School" studies of urbanization in south-central Africa. The technique of "situational analysis" was introduced by Gluckman (1958, 1961) to facilitate a dynamic approach to social phenomena by intensifying investigations about individual participants in various social occasions.

The concept of "situational selection" on the other hand was developed by Mitchell (1966, 1970, 1974), to explain how migrant labourers from "tribal" areas (i.e. rural)

manage their social relations in the town. According to his explanation Africans in the town categorize the people with whom they interact into a limited number of ethnic groups in order to comprehend social relations in the complex urban milieu.

An important point to be noted about Mitchell's use of the term is that he uses it to refer to cognitive processes. Epstein, who contributed to the development of the concept (1958, 1967, 1978) states clearly that:

> Making use of social distance tests, Mitchell was able to develop this insight to show how Africans on the copper belt were able to reduce the hundreds or so ethnic groups represented in the urban population to a mere handful of tribal categories. In this way we are presented with a model of social relations among urban Africans in one of its aspects, a kind of overall "cognitive map" by reference to which the African in town charts his way through the maze created by the fact that so many of those with whom he is in contact, direct or indirect, are total strangers to him. (Epstein 1978:11)

My use of the term situational lends little support to the usages employed by Gluckman and Mitchell mainly for two reasons. First, Gluckman's "situational analysis", the value of which I do not deny, is disadvantageous for the study of ethnic relations since it limits the investigation not only within the local group but focuses on particular individuals in the group. This is contradictory to the claim I made above about the necessity for widening the field of investigation to include elements from the regional environment.

Secondly, Mitchell's "situational approach" focuses on the cognitive aspect of behaviour or interaction while I am interested in the social organizational aspect of interaction. In other words, I am interested in people as actors or "decision makers". I am fully aware that the two cannot be mutually exclusive but I have chosen to focus from this angle because it enables me to discuss the nature of relationship between the interacting parties.

Situational ethnic identity, as is used here, refers to an event or series of events in the course of which the interacting individuals are recognized as members of, or expressing allegiance to, certain ethnic groups. Such situations of interaction can vary from buying and selling in a market place, to the performance of marriage transactions and the participation in disputes. The number of such situations is unlimited and each has its own circumstantial evidence. Thus the definition of the situation is important, not only from the point of view of the actors, but also from the observer's point of view.

The critical factor in such a definition is the criteria used to recognize the identity of the parties to the interaction. We have seen that not all criteria that are used for the definition of an ethnic group coincide (and also there is no universal list of such criteria). So it follows that some criteria are given more emphasis than others in any given situation. But, as Barth argued (1969), one cannot predict from first principles which features (or criteria) will be "emphasized and made organizationally relevant by the actors".

In the following sections I shall apply the contextual-situational approach to the question of ethnic identification in "Dor" as an ethnographic case.

The "Dor" case

Following the above discussion, it is important to delimit first the criteria that are used in this ethnographic case before attempting to show how the actors make them relevant in specific situations of interaction.

Criteria

One can isolate four main criteria which are used as indicators for the identification of ethnic groups in "Dor". These criteria are: territorial, occupational, linguistic and genealogical. Since all of them have been dealt with at various stages of our discussion, here I shall concentrate on their identificational aspect.

(1) The territorial criterion is the most flexible of all. It is highly relative and evidently hierarchical. The recognition of each territorial level, hence its association with a certain ethnic group, usually depends on the position of the person who is making the identification. For instance, it is a generally accepted view in Darfur that the northwestern area is the home of the Zaghawa. But this holds true for the people who come from outside this area. As for the people in northern Darfur, they specify the proper territories of Zaghawa as being confined to the following dars: Kobé, Gala, Tuar, Artag and Anka area.

Dar Sueini, and consequently "Dor", are not included in this scheme. In Kutum, informants told me that "Dor" is the home of the Kaitinga. From the tables shown in the last chapter it is easy to refute this claim.

Similarly, one can go on producing lists and lists of Zaghawa groups and families living outside the territories specified above. In effect, this delimitation of Zaghawa territories represents a compromise which government officials also share, and perhaps helped to create. The exclusion of Dar Sueini from Dar Zaghawa has been confirmed by the inclusion of the former in Kutum People's Council when the previous Kutum Rural Council was divided. The rest of the Zaghawa dars now comprise a separate council; Karnoy People's Council.

The Fur territory, on the other hand, is recognized as starting from Furnung southwards through Jebel Si up to Jebel Marra and Zalingei.(1) The Fur spread over a larger area and they are even more mixed with other elements than is the case with the Zaghawa.

But since our focus is on the "Dor" belt it is worth mentioning the opinion of the Zaghawa on the subject. From my interviews with various Zaghawa informants I have formed the view that for the Zaghawa the Fur territories extend from "Dor" southwards. They do not include the northern parts of Sueini, though. However, few have confessed to

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1. The Fur are specially associated with mountain areas and they are considered as "hillbillies" by other groups in Darfur.

me that "Dor" is a "mixed" area and that the Fur proper live in Furuk and southwards.

The conclusion to be drawn from this discussion is that using the criterion of territory, different units of populations can be included or excluded from the definition of an ethnic group. As for the people of Dor, their position is more uncertain. The Zaghawa consider them as Fur, the Fur consider them to be Zaghawa and they consider their country as part of Dar Zaghawa. However, some of them do consider their country to be a continuation of the Fur territories. Finally, one should draw attention to the fact that the word dar (Arabic for country) itself is a conceptualization of the territorial criterion.

(2) The occupational criterion is mainly a reflection of the different economic activities which is in turn the function of ecological adaptation. It is true that distribution of economic activities in northern Darfur coincide with the territorial distribution of large ethnic groupings but they are by no means identical. Once again the Fur and the Zaghawa dominate the scene and the general view is that the former are associated with farming and the latter with animal husbandry. We have seen in the previous chapters how this association is justified in terms of the dominant economic activity in the area.

The environment plays an important part in this respect because it imposes practical limitations on the options that the local people may consider. Raising camels in Jebel Si or Jebel Marra, for example, is impracticable

because of the unfavourable conditions in the rainy season (wet clay soil and flies). On the other hand crop cultivation in Dar Zaghawa is highly risky and unprofitable. For this reason we find that although both the economies of the north and south are mixed, each nevertheless concentrates on either pastoralism or cultivation. But since each activity has its organizational requirements (see Chapters III and IV) it also follows that each community will develop a style of life that is different from the other.

As far as ethnic identification is concerned, it is easy to associate these different life styles with the major ethnic groups that occupy these territories. Haaland's argument makes this assumption clear and I agree with him. I also accept his argument, at a certain level, that processes of identity changes are "conditioned by factors determining the profitability of alternative ways of value management" (Haaland 1972 :109). I would however dispute his conclusion that people establish new identities as soon as they have successfully adopted a new economic career; on the basis that this is a simplistic view of the whole process. Furthermore his conclusion implies that ethnic groups are to be defined wholly in terms of the patterns of their economic activities and this is also unacceptable.

In fact the major theme of this thesis is to prove the invalidity of this view. My counter argument, put in a nutshell, is that while the economy is an important factor in ethnic dynamics, it is by no means the only one.

However, ethnic groups may be defined in terms of occupation only when this criterion is relevant in a given situation. Other criteria, or a combination of them, may be more relevant in other situations in which case they should not be ignored for the sake of the first one.

The case of "Dor" is even more complex with regard to the criterion of occupation. As it occupies a transitional zone where both farming and animal husbandry are practised, in more or less the same degree, it is usually difficult to classify the people there with either of the two main ethnic groups. As I have mentioned earlier, the environment in northern Darfur is undergoing drastic changes and this is bound to affect the division of ethnic groups with respect to ecological adaptation. The main result of this is the southward expansion of the pastoral zone which is threatening the practice of cultivation. Many people from the agricultural zone are also turning to pastoralism. The migration of people from Dar Zaghawa and "Dor" is ever increasing. The net outcome of all this is yet to be seen in the years to come.

(3) The linguistic criterion is based on the recognition of three speech communities: Fur, Zaghawa and Korabery. Arabic is, of course, the lingua franca for all the inhabitants of Darfur; for this reason it does not serve as a criterion for the definition of ethnic groups there.

The relationship between language and ethnic group is mediated through the concept of culture. Language is

without doubt one of the most powerful instruments of the latter. This is because language is a powerful medium of communication. It is therefore assumed that people who speak a certain language have a similar cultural background which is unique to a given ethnic group, hence the association is made between language and ethnic group. From this point of view, the three groups of Fur, Zaghawa and "Korabery" are defined as speakers of Fur, speakers of Zaghawa and speakers of both languages, respectively. As a matter of fact that is the general sense in which my informants have used the word Korabery, apart from a few exceptions who added that the word also refers to mixed origin. In this respect there is a general agreement between Zaghawa, Fur and "Dor" informants. They all think that a "Korabery" is a person who speaks both Fur and Zaghawa languages. At the same time when I asked these informants about the "home" of the "Korabery", the answer came most readily, "Dor". As it is, this shows the tendency to conceive ethnic entities in terms of language representation.

Many scholars have recognized this special relationship of language and ethnic identity. In a recent article, Fishman (1977) refers to this association by arguing that:

> There is a considerable similarity between the nature and functions of ethnicity boundaries and the nature and functions of language boundaries....This is a natural consequence of the easy involvement of the latter in the implementation and symbolization of the former, as well as the function of the inherent arbitrariness and manipulability which both types of boundaries manifest.
> (Fishman 1977:28)

Although language is not inevitable to ethnic definition, it nevertheless has the unique function of symbolizing such entities. No wonder then that people who cross ethnic boundaries most readily adopt the language of their host group. This is actually the case with the examples that I have mentioned earlier. However, this point alone cannot explain the feature of multilingualism in "Dor". In a frontier where two cultures meet it is often difficult to draw a line between them. People have access to the resources of both cultures but the actual choices they make depend on the interest of each individual and his ability to manipulate these resources.

Going back to Haaland's argument I agree with him that ethnic processes might be initiated by value management considerations; but I hold that such a process cannot be completed unless the cultural resources of the host group are made available to the individual who is involved in that process. In other words, a Fur does not become a Zaghawi the moment he adopts pastoralism and stays in Zaghawa territory. In addition to that he should be able to manipulate Zaghawa cultural resources in order to gain acceptance as a member of the new ethnic group. Language is one such resource which people often manipulate. For this reason it is used as a criterion to establish ethnic identities. I shall shortly give examples from "Dor" to show how that is achieved.

(4) The genealogical criterion does not refer to real kinship relations but to fictitious kinship as well. At

the moment the largest kinship unit in northern Darfur is the clan. As I mentioned earlier, there is no comprehensive genealogical charter that relates all Zaghawa clans in one kinship system. The same is true about the Fur and the Tunjur. In spite of this fact informants were able to say which clans constitute the Fur and which clans constitute the Zaghawa ethnic entities. Such ideas can be collectively referred to as "myths of origin". These myths of origin are justifications for the unity of clans and not an explanation for the composition of the ethnic group. Their role is to bridge the gap between the known history of the clan and the unknown history of the ethnic group.

I have discussed several such "myths" in earlier parts of this thesis. The legend of Ahmed al-Magur, the story of Mohammad al-Barnawi and the different genealogical charters of the Kaitinga are all examples of the "myth of origin" aspect in the definition of ethnic entities. My specific view about this is that while we cannot accept these as genuine histories, they should be treated as one possible criterion of ethnic identification.

Like the other criteria, it is also applied situationally in the sense that actors do manipulate these "myths of origin" to express allegiance to a certain ethnic group. In "Dor" there is a proverb that deals specifically with the situational usage of genealogy in interethnic relations: they say "Conflict reveals origins". This proverb is the opposite of the proverb cited in Chapter VII which is:

"Blood is compelling and co-living is achieved by co-operation." The last proverb emphasizes communal membership. The former, on the other hand, emphasizes the importance of genealogy. Its meaning is that when a person feels threatened, in a conflict situation, he resorts to the mobilization of support from those with whom he shares common origin. In this case the criterion used for defining the ethnic group is that of genealogy. It is not important whether the claim of origin is true or false since, as Cunnison (1971)argues,these are "ideologies". Hence, what is important to us is how people use them to perceive social relations.

Another important point regarding myths of origin is that they are used flexibly to indicate any degree of genealogical (real or not) link between a person and the supposed founder of the group. Its actual operation is similar to that of the segmentary lineage system. The level of group membership which is mobilized depends on the relative distance/position of the parties to the interaction. For example, the clans of Dar Tuar will support each other if one of them is involved in a conflict with the Kobé and both sub-groups unite as Zaghawa in the face of external threat from another ethnic group.

Situational identification: "how the system works"

Before continuing with the task of showing "how the system actually works", I would like to point out two considerations which may limit the value of any generalizations in this field. These are:

Firstly, the lack of an acceptable general theory of ethnicity makes the development of a clear-cut model of ethnic identification more difficult because the latter is a sub-field of the former.

Secondly, the transitional character of the "Dor" belt with its mixed life-styles inhibits any generalization about a dominant economic career (occupation) unless very detailed information on the economy is made available.

Thirdly, ethnic heterogeneity, another important characteristic of "Dor", makes it difficult to predict how a particular individual would react, in terms of ethnic identification, in a certain situation unless the circumstances surrounding that situation are investigated.

With the above considerations in mind, I shall try first to give the insider's view, i.e. "folk model" of how ethnic identifications are used in "Dor" society. Then, using this "folk model" and my own observations I shall show "how the system works".

The issue of models in social anthropology is a complicated one and I do not want to indulge in this debate here. However, I would like to note that the folk view I am going to express here is a combination of an "ideological" and an "ideal" model. By "ideological" I mean people's notions of "what things ought to be like". On the other hand, I mean by "ideal" people's views of"what things are actually like". In this latter case the people themselves record their observations of their own society, hence we expect them to be aware of the discrepancy between ideology

and practice with respect to their own behaviour or actions.

Fortunately there are two proverbs in "Dor" that summarize the folk model of interethnic relations. I have referred to both proverbs earlier in this chapter, but here I shall attempt to explain each of them in more detail.

The first proverb, "blood is compelling and co-living is achieved by co-operation", is a juxtaposition of the roles of descent and community membership. Blood relationship or descent is something prescribed, hence one has no choice but to recognize it. In contrast to this one can only establish good relationships with members of one's community (co-living) by co-operating with them and this is done through one's own choice. Indeed, even blood relatives need to co-operate if they are to sustain good relationships with each other.

In Chapter VII we have seen how the high degree of ethnic co-residence and intermarriage emphasizes the importance of community membership, which is the basis of day-to-day interaction. My informants in "Dor" often told me: "we live together, we intermarry with each other, we go to the same markets and the same wells and we take our animals to the same pastures; therefore we are all brothers." This inductive method of expressing communal relations reflects the spirit of the proverb which emphasizes harmony rather than conflict and unity rather than diversity.

Sociologically, of course, there is some truth in the picture I have just given because no society can survive

without some degree of co-operation between its members. But it is equally true to say that no society is free of conflict. People have diversity of interests but sometimes they compete in order to achieve similar goals. And competition can lead to conflict. In "Dor", the people are aware of this fact and so they have their own justification for behaviour in situations of conflict. This takes us to the second proverb.

"Conflict reveals origins" is the proverb that justifies the mobilization of ethnic group membership for support in conflict situations. The meaning of this proverb is that if two persons should disagree over something and they are unable to reconcile their differences, so that the situation develops into a real conflict between the two sides, then each side will try to mobilize support from members of their own ethnic group. This will reveal the ethnic background of each side (his/her origin). As I have already indicated the term origin refers to any level of genealogical link up to the ethnic group itself (its logic being similar to that of a segmentary lineage system). Again I should emphasize that such genealogical references are not necessarily historical facts, but they represent ideological statements by the people concerned.

On the face of it, this proverb gives support for kinship-based relationships. Theoretically, this contradicts the spirit of the first proverb. In reality this contradiction is resolved through two mechanisms. First, the interacting individuals consider the two principles of

communal membership and membership of a descent group as alternative choices which they can also combine. The actual choice is then determined by the nature of interaction or type of social activity being pursued.

For instance, the organization of a work party (nafir) usually depends on village membership. But if the organizer has kinsmen living with him in the same village they feel most obliged to attend his work party. It is difficult to generalize here on different activities but as a general ~~principle~~ indication, the choice of principle for mobilization of support depends on which one happens to be effective for the type of co-operation which is sought by the actor or actors.

The second mechanism for resolving the conflict between the two organizing principles (proverbs) is by extending the meaning or application of the word "origin". In its strictest sense the word refers to a kinship unit, but people do extend it to include non-kinship relations. For example, members of a territorial unit (dar) or a local community (a village or a group of villages) may be referred to in certain contexts as "brothers". This may happen in the case of a religious ceremony (e.g Eid) or a secular activity like the building of a local school.

The idea of the extension of kinship concepts to include non-kinship relations is common in sociological literature. A similar form to that in "Dor" has been reported by Holy (1974) for the Berti of Togabo omodiya (see Chapter II). Assessing the importance of lineage

membership and village membership as the two bases of recruitment to collective activities, the writer argues that the Berti do not consider them to be in opposition or mutually exclusive. He further adds:

> The Berti do not need to distinguish them as this would mean an unnecessary parallelism. In fact, they see the entire system of norms and claims of recruitment primarily in one line, that of kinship, and each plurality of individuals which sometimes acts as a corporate whole is seen as a kinship group regardless of whether kinship bonds exist between all its members. (Holy 1974:170)

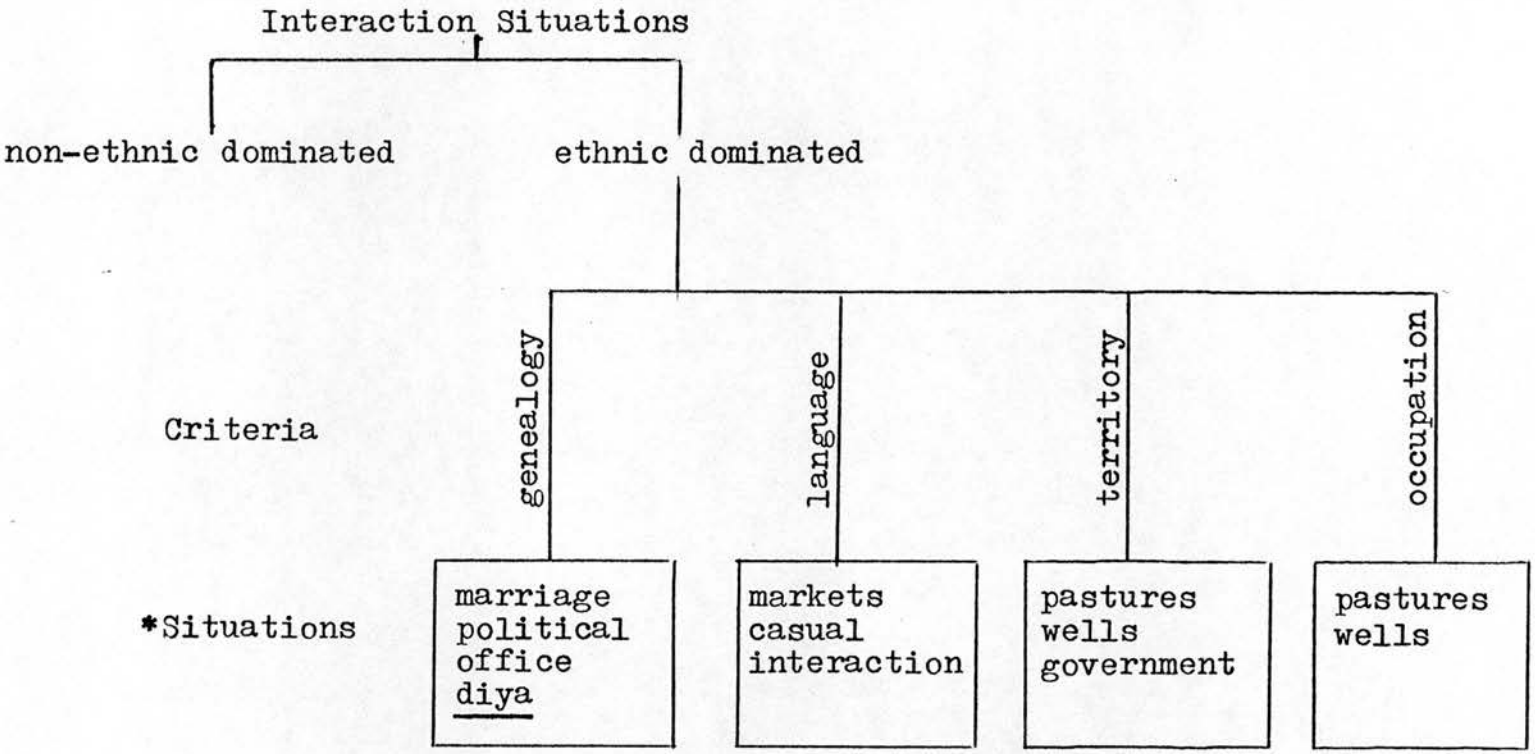
Although the "Dor" case is similar in many respects to the Berti example reported by Holy, I would still hold that the people of "Dor" are aware of and do distinguish the two principles of recruitment. As such I would argue that the reconciliation of the two principles for "Dor" people is achieved through the use of "choice" rather than the conceptual merger of the two principles.

One may ask, where is ethnic identification from all this? The answer is that ethnic identification in my opinion is an aspect of interaction in the sense that actors relate or locate the positions of each other in the course of social activity. People's notions about who should perform these activities or whom one should rely upon for help obviously play an important role in that process. In addition, the realities that lie behind each interaction situation plays an equally important role in directing the parties to the interaction as to what notions they should invoke to justify their action.

There are some situations where the interacting individuals do not need to identify each other. In other words ethnic identification may not be relevant in this case. In other situations the need for identification increases for different reasons, either because a mobilization of support is needed or a contract is to be made for which such references become important safeguards. As I indicated earlier, generalizations about different situations are difficult at this stage because of the unique circumstances of each situation. We do not expect identification in a feud or diya paying for that matter to be similar to identification in a work party or a market place. Nevertheless, because of the broad similarities of some classes of situations and to give an approximate (but not adequate) view of how the system works, I have set the scheme in Fig. No. 5 to serve as a framework. The scheme does not include all possible situations. Another point is that the represented situations are not necessarily mutually exclusive, hence their classification is subject to the reservations I have already made.

I have divided interaction situations into two categories: non-ethnic dominated and ethnic dominated. The first category generally corresponds with the principle of community membership in the sense that people do not need to express ethnic allegiances when pursuing these activities. Such situations include, for example, work parties, co-operation in daily activities and religious ceremonial.

Fig. 5. Interaction Situations and Criteria of Identification



* Situations in which these criteria are most commonly applied.

The other category - ethnic dominated - demands ethnic identification. In other words the question of "origin" becomes important. This applies mainly when the parties to the interaction are strangers (not members of the same local community). It also applies to members of the same local community who find themselves in conflict with each other. In this latter case the identification is usually based on the genealogical criterion. But in the case of "strangers" any of the four criteria or a combination of them might be used in order to establish identities. The exact procedure which will be followed and the combination of ethnic characteristics that are made relevant will depend on the circumstances of the interaction plus the interests of the parties involved.

I have tried here to provide a general framework. A more sophisticated model can be constructed after further research. The present discussion is supposed to pave the way for it.

In the rest of this chapter, I am going to illustrate my discussion with examples of real situations that show how the actors manipulated their identifications.[1]

Examples

In 1968 fighting took place between the Zaghawa and Arab camel-nomads at Geneik pool in northern Sueini. It was generated by competition over natural resources in the pastoral sector (see Chapter V). However, this particular incident was triggered by disputes over animal

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1. For further examples, see Appendix II (p.296)

thefts that allegedly took place near the water source. The fight escalated from a dispute involving a few camps into a full war between the entire members of the two ethnic groups. Several people were killed and hundreds of animals were lost (through robbery or slaughter). The fight also involved heavy use of firearms (rifles and machine guns). But the district authorities managed to stop the fighting after three days.

On that occasion, the people of "Dor" sided with the Zaghawa. Indeed some of them were indirectly involved in the events because they lost their animals too. When a tribunal was set up by the government authorities to look into the dispute, the chief of Sueini represented the Zaghawa side together with other chiefs from Dar Zaghawa. All the parties concerned, and the government officials too, considered the dispute to have been between the Zaghawa and the Arabs. No reference to the Kaitinga, Tunjur, Berti or any other group was made although many of them were affected by the dispute. But it is evident that all the inhabitants of Sueini were included in the definition of Zaghawa, hence there was no need for further references.

Without going into the details of that dispute which the government officials described as "tribal", one could argue that this is a typical case of resource competition where ethnic loyalties reflect the economic interests of the people involved. Now it is interesting to note that the local people (as against the Arabs) used to invest in camels which they entrusted to the Arabs. That trend had

reached its peak in the early 1960's when the international trading of camls started to flourish (with Egypt and Libya). By the late sixties many local people became involved in livestock trading. This increased the number of Zaghawa herders who managed their own flocks. In addition to this rumours were circulated about the dishonesty of Arab herders with regard to the management of the animals of the local people.

In all, the rate of withdrawal of camels from the Arabs reached its peak in the early 1970's and today there are hardly any animals entrusted to the Arabs. Instead, the people of "Dor" entrust their animals now to Zaghawa friends or their fellow villagers who have taken to camel nomadism. As a result, the previous relationship of symbiosis between the Arabs and the Zaghawa has now changed into one of competition.

Resource competition has long been recognized as an important factor in ethnic dynamics by various scholars (e.g. Cohen 1974, Patterson 1976, Despres 1975 and Cross 1978). In such cases people tend to mobilize ethnic allegiance in order to face their competitors. In the above example this mobilization has largely followed a territorial definition of ethnic groups. The inhabitants of northern Darfur were defined as Zaghawa (both by themselves and the Arabs) in order to face the threat of the intruding Arabs. It can also be said that the occupational criterion was used to a certain extent in the identification process because the Arabs, as a group, are lamely defined by their

occupation as camel nomads. The local people (Zaghawa) on the other hand have a mixed economy.

As a matter of fact the two criteria of territory and occupation are only conceptually distinguishable but in practice they are combined in identification processes. But it is my opinion that the people are aware of this distinction; just as they are aware of the distinction between descent group and local community membership. That is why there is a popular stereotype of the Zaghawa as pastoralists and the Fur as cultivators. This is a recognition of the occupational differences between the two groups. It is interesting to note that as far as occupation is concerned only these two labels are used.

Another example of situational ethnic identification comes from an experience I had with a Seinga shaikh from "Dor" central area. I first met him in the village of Qoz Laban in Sayé where he went to collect taxes from his followers. When I asked him, in the presence of some villagers, about his ethnic group, he replied: Tunjur. I later came to know that the majority of inhabitants of the village also claim Tunjur identity.

Several days later, I went to see the same man at his house in Hillat Qoz in the course of conducting a household survey. When I asked him about his ethnic group he told me that he belongs to the Seinga. Later, I understood from other informants that the man is a popular shaikh who hopes to be chosen for the office of assistant chief (for there were rumours that the government wanted to create such an office).

With regard to the folk model, it is clear that the man utilized the principle of community membership to identify with his Tunjur followers on the first occasion. Hence we can say that the criteria of territory and occupation were most relevant in this case. In the second occasion, however, he utilized the principle of descent to establish his Seinga identity. We can therefore conclude that the criterion of genealogy was most relevant on the second occasion.

Looking back at these incidents, one cannot accuse the informant of telling lies, nor can we accuse him of ignorance. I would rather argue that the man was only manipulating his cultural resources to express his practical interests which is perfectly normal by the standards of his own society. Actually I had many experiences in the field of persons telling me that they belong to group "X" for example, and on later occasions professing a "Y" identity. The following lengthy quotation by MacMichael tells us more about the generality of this phenomenon in northern Darfur. Writing about the inhabitants of Furnung, he states:

> The villagers themselves are a blend of Tungur and Fur, black but with less distinctively negroid features than the Fur of Marra and Si. They talk among themselves in the Fur dialect but all seem to know Arabic as well. Such of them as I questioned called themselves Tungur, no doubt because of the aristocratic associations of the name, and preserved a tradition that they came originally from Dongola, but they admitted that many of their fellow-villagers were Fur and that the two races had intermarried freely and on no particular system for generations. They regarded the Tungur as being the real owners of the dār. Of the criterion whereby they decided whether a child of mixed origin was

> Tungur or Fur I could extract no coherent account. There was some talk of the "mother's mother" ("haboba"), but when pressed for details they always fell back on the Muhammadan Arab custom obtaining in such matters. Their Shartai (1), Hasan Kanjok, they called a Tungurawi, but when I met him some days later and questioned him in the presence of the Fur Shartai of Si and the Tungurawi Shartai of Kutum, he evidently felt himself in a quandry, and the other two fidgetted uneasily; if he called himself Tungurawi he risked a smile at his pretentiousness and a sneer at his pusillanimity, so he hesitated and tried "Tungur-Fur" and when pressed decided for "Fur". As a matter of fact "Tungur-Fur" is the term which would best describe the people of Furnung. (MacMichael 1922, vol. 1:126)

Leaving aside MacMichael's obsesssion with the question of race (which I have discussed earlier in this chapter), one wonders whether the reported case is one of confusion or multiple identification. The writer seems to imply the first, but I am certain that this phenomenon is common enough in Darfur and indeed in the whole of the Sudanic Belt (see Haaland 1969, Lovejoy and Baier 1975, and Horowitz 1975). Any attempt to gather authentic facts in the field is therefore a fruitless exercise.

Contrary to the common belief, there are no independent facts about ethnic identity. These can only be recognized in relation to other facts, i.e. the social context of their existence, hence my suggestion to treat ethnic identification as a situational phenomenon. The actual processes involve the evaluation by the actors of the situations they deal with. Then they manipulate the

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1. Shartai is a chief with a rank higher than omda.

principles provided in their own model to choose the ethnic characteristics (criteria) that are relevant for the situation and the appropriate ethnic label is then employed. The interests of the parties to the interaction therefore play a critical role in evaluating the circumstances surrounding the situation and in the subsequent choice of ethnic identity.

In the example given by MacMichael the informant was anxious to secure his interest in the support of both the Fur and Tunjur chiefs. It is possible to imagine that had the writer asked him about his ethnic identity in front of each chief separately he would have claimed Fur identity then Tunjur identity. In each case he could have manipulated the "myths of origin" about the Fur and Tunjur to justify his claim. It is clear that even in his "Fur-Tunger" answer he utilized these "myths."

I should note at this juncture that I have noticed a similar attitude in Dor. The chief (whose mother is a Zaghawa Kobé) told me that his people are more similar to the Zaghawa in their way of life. When I asked a Kaitinga woman whether she prefers a Zaghawa or Fur identity, she replied: Zaghawa. Her justification was that she prefers to be a pastoralist like the Zaghawa. In the context of "Dor" a Zaghawa status is more prestigious because it is associated with wealth. However, this feature can be better explored through the discussion of ethnic stratification.

Now we may turn to consider our fourth criterion of identification: language. I asked a local historian

from "Dor" central how he classifies the Dangari who live in Dar Artag and those who live in Furuk. His answer was: "The Dangari who live in Dar Artag are Zaghawa and those who live here are Fur, but originally they are one clan." When I asked him why;he said that those members of the clan who live in Dar Artag speak the Zaghawa language while those who live in Furuk speak the Fur language. He also told me that the people of "Dor" are called Korabery because they speak both languages. Although the term is sometimes used in a derogatory sense the people concerned subscribe to it by recognizing that it refers to them.

One of the common examples of situations where the language criterion is used in ethnic identification is in the market place. In Chapter VI I outlined the procedure which people follow in communicating with each other in the market place. In a society where people cannot be distinguished either by means of their physical appearance or the clothes they wear, verbal communication assumes special importance. Consequently, ethnic identification in the market place begins with "linguistic mapping".

The parties to the interaction may content themselves with the linguistic definition of their respective identities. On the other hand they may wish to have more information about their partners - as in the case of long-term economic contracts - in which case they find it necessary to ask questions relating to territorial, occupational or genealogical criteria. This is specially true about transactions involving animals because livestock stealing is common in this part of Darfur.

Here is one example from my experience in the market of Dor. I was sitting with a Tunjur merchant in the shade where he had his goods displayed when a woman came to buy sugar. He spoke to her in Zaghawa and the woman responded in the same language. I later asked him if he knew who she was, but his answer was negative. Later when I asked some of the people I knew at the market place, they told me that she came from Tekerabé and that she belonged to Awlad Tako. Evidently, the merchant assumed the woman belonged to the Zaghawa because of the way she spoke Arabic. He then proceeded to speak to her in her own language as a way of telling her that he knew her identity.

In my judgement, the issues involved in the use of language for ethnic labelling are complicated. Its full understanding would require dealing with the social psychology of interaction. It is not possible, however, to penetrate into that area here as I do not have the specific data required for that kind of discussion.

The above examples illustrate how ethnic characteristics are made relevant in varying situations of interaction to define group membership. Again I end this discussion by emphasizing the fact that the different criteria of identification mentioned here are not mutually exclusive. People may use them separately or in combination. New criteria may also be introduced. Indeed, the very fact that social change is on the move means that the existing criteria may also change.

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In this chapter I have dealt with three main topics, all of which are interrelated. I started off by challenging the utility of a concept that has traditionally occupied a favourite place in anthropological literature, "tribe". The survey of the literature on this issue shows conclusively that its usage was promoted by Western stereotypes of non-industrial societies. The colonial era coupled with the flourishing of functionalist anthropology in the first half of this century gave the stereotype of "tribal society" an academic status. My objection to the concept of "tribe" is not so much with its roots but with the fact that it is based on assumptions that are simply untrue. For this reason I have chosen to adopt the term "ethnic group" not only to replace "tribe" but also to represent other social groups that are hitherto unaccounted for by this latter concept.

The second topic I discussed in this chapter is an evaluation of the utility of the Barthian approach in explaining ethnic processes (ethnic dynamics). I concentrated especially on Haaland's study on the Fur/Baggara relations where he also makes cross-references to Fur/Zaghawa relations. Although I recognize the potential utility of the Barthian approach and in particular its analysis of strategic value management, I still find the general application of the approach to the study of ethnicity full of problems.

I have therefore tried to show what I think is wrong with the Barthian approach by making three criticisms. The first criticism is that the model allows the individual

to have only one identity at a time. In my opinion this is a rigid view of the situation.

Secondly, the exponents of the Barthian approach have largely depended on ecological analysis to explain ethnic group relations. Although they do not formally advocate the delimitation of analysis to economic factors only, the practical result of their studies imply economic determinism.

My third point of criticism of the Barthian approach in general, and Haaland's study in particular, concerns the absence of a historical dimension. Because ethnic group relations is a process in time I have suggested that historical data be incorporated in such studies. I have also suggested that ethnic identity be considered as a multidimensional phenomenon.

The rest of the chapter constitutes an application of this latter suggestion. In it I have attempted to explore an alternative way of explaining the dynamics of ethnic identification. In addition to the suggestions already made in conjunction with my criticisms of the Barthian framework, my approach proceeds with the assumption that ethnic identities are subject to the general social context in which they operate and also the particular situations of interaction in which the actors find themselves. The actual identification depends on the interests of the actors who, using the logic of their own folk model, select certain ethnic characteristics and use them as criteria for identification. There is no <u>a priori</u> list of

criteria that applies to every society, and consequently it is important that each ethnographic situation is dealt with separately. By applying a contextual-situational approach to ethnic identification in "Dor" I am able to specify four criteria of identification which are mostly relevant for this society. These are territory, occupation, language and genealogy.

The folk model depicts two different types of group membership, local community membership and descent group membership. These are the two principles of recruitment or mobilization of people for support in social activities. The actors manipulate them in order to secure their interests. In this sense they consider these principles as alternatives and not as being in opposition to each other.

The application of the identification criteria also follow broadly the same principles. Members of a local community do not co-operate on an ethnic basis, hence identification is not relevant. But when they interact with members of a different community the criteria of identification come into play. The particular combination of them (used in any given situation) depends on the circumstances and the interests of the parties to the interaction. As a general rule conflict situations call for stricter identification and here people tend to apply the genealogical criterion. Even within the same local community serious conflicts can lead to the mobilization of ethnic support, hence descent group membership becomes relevant. That is why the people say "conflict reveals origins".

CONCLUSIONS

In this study I have examined the state of ethnic group relations in the area of "Dor" with the aim of understanding how ethnic identities are expressed. In so doing I have also tested the Barthian approach to ethnic studies which I have subsequently shown to be inadequate for explaining the situation in "Dor". I have therefore sought to improve this approach by proposing a contextual -situational perspective. The main conclusions from my study can be summarized in the following way:

1. It is important that historical data is incorporated into the analysis of ethnic group relations since these change according to the surrounding circumstances. Hence the nature of identification with these groups also changes, resulting in a dynamic process.

2. Conventional studies have treated ethnic groups as separate independent units by concentrating on the question of "core institutions". Barth and his colleagues, on the other hand, have focused their attention on the problem of "ethnic boundaries". However both approaches have neglected important relevant information. I have demonstrated in this study the advantage of treating ethnic groups in the wider context of their existence; that is by looking into local as well as regional levels.

3. Ethnic groups are relativistic, therefore ethnic identification may vary according to the variety of social situations in which the actors participate. This conclusion

parallels suggestions advanced by several other recent analyses such as Despres (1975), Patterson (1976) and Arens (1978). The situational nature of ethnic identification is thus the main source of its dynamism.

4. The idea of producing standard criteria for the definition of ethnic groups is too ideal (chiefly Narrol 1964). On the other hand Barth and his colleagues have largely defined ethnic groups in terms of ecological adaptations, which resulted in an excessive emphasis on the economic factor in their analyses. I have shown that this latter approach is also inadequate since it gives an over-simplistic view of how ethnic identities are manipulated.

5. A better way to understand the phenomenon of ethnicity in a given society is therefore to look into the people's social relations and reveal the criteria that they use for defining ethnic groups. Only when this is combined with an investigation of the folk model is an adequate sociological analysis of ethnicity possible.

6. In "Dor" four criteria for defining ethnic groups are used (territory, occupation, language and genealogy). Actors manipulate these criteria to identify with groups according to their interests and situations of interaction.

7. Since it is clear that ethnic identification is more varied than was once imagined we must now investigate more extensively the situations in which ethnic identities

vary, as well as the criteria used in such identifications. It will also be necessary to examine situations in which ethnicity is not a dominant element, in contrast with those in which it is. The present study is a contribution to this enterprise.

A P P E N D I X I

Tables

Household Census Card

Ref. Area . . . . . .Village . . . . . .
Name . . . . . .Ethnic Group . . . .Occupation . . .
Age . . . . Place of Birth . . . . . .
Places of Residence (1) . . . . .(2) . . . . . (3) . . . .
Former Places of Residence (1) . . . . (2) . . . . (3) . .
Did You Live In a City/No. . One Year. . 2-4Years. . 5 . .

Father's Name . . . . . .Ethnic Group . . . . . .
Occupation . . . . Age . . . Place of Birth . . . . . .
F.'s Places of Residence (1) . . . (2) . . . (3) . . . . .
F.'s Former Places of Residence (1) . . . (2). . . (3) . .
F.'s Wives/Name. . . E.G. . . . . P. of M. . . . N.of CH .
N. . . . .E.G. . . . . P. of M. . . . N.of CH .
N. . . . .E.G. . . . . P. of M. . . . N.of CH .
N. . . . .E.G. . . . . P. of M. . . . N.of CH .
N. . . . .E.G. . . . . P. of M. . . . N.of CH .
Tick informant's mother

Informant's Wives:
Name. . . . . E.G. . . . . P.of Residence . . . .
Age . . . Place of Birth. . . P. of Marriage . . . N.ofCH.

Name. . . . . E.G. . . . . P. of Residence. . . .
Age . . . Place of Birth . . .P. of Marriage . . . N.ofCH.

Name. . . . . E.G. . . . . P. of Residence. . . .
Age . . . Place of Birth. . . P. of Marriage . . . N.ofCH.

Name. . . . . E.G. . . . . P. of Residence. . . .
Age . . . Place of Birth. . . P. of Marriage . . . N.ofCH.

Additional Information ; . . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . .

Table 18. Classification of respondants according to ethnic group and place of birth

ETHNIC GROUP	PLACE OF BIRTH									
	Sayé	Dor	Turé	Disa	Qoz	Um Shidik	Zaghawa North	Fur South	Dár Sa'id	Total
Tunjur	17	6	2	21				5	1	52
Zaghawa	6	7	2	9	3	3	1	1	1	33
Kaitinga		6		5	3			1		15
Seinga		6				1				7
Berti		1		3				2		6
Fur	2	2								4
Jawama				2				1		3
A. Tako						1		1		2
Masalit		1		1						2
Jallaba		2								2

Table 19. Classification of parents of respondants from Sayé by ethnic group

RESPONDANT'S FATHER	RESPONDANT'S MOTHER												
	Tunjur	Zaghawa	Kaitinga	Seinga	Berti	Fur	Jawama	A. Tako	Masalit	Jallaba	Arabs	Korabery	Others
Tunjur	45					1					1		1
Zaghawa		9	3	1	1	2	2						1
Kaitinga		1	1										
Seinga													
Berti													
Fur		1				2							
Jawama	1					1							
A. Tako													
Masalit													
Jallaba													

	No.	Percentage
marriages within the group	57	77
marriages outside the group	17	23
Total	74	100

Table 20. Classification of parents of Respondants from Dor by ethnic group

RESPONDANT'S FATHER	RESPONDANT'S MOTHER												
	Tunjur	Zaghawa	Kaitinga	Seinga	Berti	Fur	Jawama	A. Tako	Masalit	Jallaba	Arabs	Korabery	Others
Tunjur	4	5		1	1	1					1		
Zaghawa	1	8	1	3		1							1
Kaitinga	4	4	7			1							1
Seinga		6		5					2				
Berti		2											
Fur		1				4							
Jawama	1					1							
A. Tako		2				1		1					1
Masalit			1						1				
Jallaba	1	1	1	1		1			1				1

	No.	Percentage
marriages within the group	30	37
marriages outside the group	51	63
Total	81	100

Table 21. Classification of Parents of Respondants from Disa by ethnic group

RESPONDANT'S FATHER	RESPONDANT'S MOTHER												
	Tunjur	Zaghawa	Kaitinga	Seinga	Berti	Fur	Jawama	A. Tako	Masalit	Jallaba	Arabs	Korabery	Others
Tunjur	32	1	1		2		1				1		1
Zaghawa	2	10	5		1	2							
Kaitinga		1	8								1		1
Seinga													
Berti	1				5	1							
Fur													
Jawama			2				2						
A. Tako													
Masalit			1										
Jallaba													

	No.	Percentage
marriages within the group	57	69.5
marriages outside the group	25	30.5
Total	82	100.0

Table 22. Classification of informants' fathers' most significant move

AREA	Number of persons for each type of movement					Total	Percentage of persons who moved
	Far Region	Far Community	Neighbouring Community	Within Community	Not Moved		
Sayé	6	1		5	24	36	33.3
Dor	2	6	10	7	15	40	62.5
Disa	4		5	5	36	50	28.0

Table 23. Classification of marriages from Sayé by the ethnic groups of husbands and wives

HUSBAND'S ETHNIC GROUP	WIFE'S ETHNIC GROUP												
	Tunjur	Zaghawa	Kaitinga	Seinga	Berti	Fur	Jawáma	A. Tako	Masálít	Jallaba	Arabs	Koraberry	Others
Tunjur	25		2			3							
Zaghawa	1	8	3			1						1	
Kaitinga			1										
Seinga													
Berti													
Fur		1	1			1							
Jawáma			1										
A. Tako													
Masálít													
Jallaba													

	No.	Percentage
marriages within the group	35	71.4
marriages outside the group	14	28.6
Total	49	100.0

Table 24. Classification of marriages from Dor by the ethnic groups of husbands and wives

HUSBAND'S ETHNIC GROUP	WIFE'S ETHNIC GROUP												
	Tunjur	Zaghawa	Kaitinga	Seinga	Berti	Fur	Jawama	A. Tako	Masálít	Jallaba	Arabs	Korabery	Others
Tunjur	5	5		1	2				1				1
Zaghawa		7	2	3		1					2		
Kaitinga	1	6	5	1									
Seinga	3	4		6	1								
Berti		1			1								
Fur	1			1	1								
Jawámá													
A. Tako		2				1			1				
Masálít				1						1			
Jallába	2	1	1	1						1			

	No.	Percentage
marriages within the group	26	35.1
marriages outside the group	48	64.9
Total	74	100.0

Table 25. Classification of marriages from Disa by the ethnic groups of husbands and wives

HUSBAND'S ETHNIC GROUP	WIFE'S ETHNIC GROUP												
	Tunjur	Zaghawa	Kaitinga	Seinga	Berti	Fur	Jawáma	A. Tako	Masálít	Jallaba	Arabs	Korabery	Others
Tunjur	21	1	3			1				1	2		
Zaghawa	1	10	5		1						1		
Kaitinga	1	1	5										
Seinga													
Berti		1			6								
Fur													
Jawáma							2						
A. Tako													
Masálít			1							1			
Jallába													

	No.	Percentage
marriages within the group	45	69.2
marriages outside the group	20	30.8
Total	65	100.0

APPENDIX II

CASE STUDIES

1. Diya between the Seinga and the Zaghawa
2. Diya between the Seinga and the Zaghawa
3. The Mediator in Disa Market
4. The Awlad Tāko of Tekerabé
5. The Awlad Hilal Clan
6. A Dispute over Agricultural Land in Sayé

1. Diya between the Seinga and the Zaghawa

The term diya (Arabic) refers to the payment made as a compensation for the loss of human life. As such it is a method of settling conflicts between groups of people by avoiding vengeance or retaliation by the agrieved party. As a social institution, diya settlements involve complicated procedures of arbitration, mediation and communal participation. Here I am only interested in the way ethnic identities are made relevant in such situations. For this reason I do not propose to give an elaborate account of diya as an institution, but basic information will be supplied.

At the outset it is important to recognize the difference, in terms of practice, between the settlement of homicide that takes place within the ethnic group and that which takes place without. Because each ethnic group originally represents an organization it is usually the practice for elders to prevent conflicts from developing into fights, and even when the unexpected happens (i.e. somebody is killed) they usually succeed in defusing the tension and thereby prevent further loss of life. For this reason I could not find a single example of vengeance killing between members of one ethnic group.

On the other hand, if homicide occurs between members of different ethnic groups, the expectation is that mobilization for vengeance will take place and on a large scale, unless very powerful mediators should intervene.

In the example of inter-tribal conflict given in Chapter VIII (p. 271), several people died before fighting was stopped. One important idea behind diya settlement is redressing a wrong-doing which took place "accidentally". If a person stabs another with a knife and kills him, this will still be considered "accidental" death unless it can be proved that the killer actually wanted to kill the victim. Because the settlement of a homicide case depends on the evaluation of the intentions of the killer, it is not difficult to imagine why the establishment of peace through diya is more difficult in inter-ethnic than in intra-ethnic cases. Good intentions between members of the same group are always taken for granted and are thought to be the basis of their solidarity.

Another important point to be made about in-group and intra-group diya settlements is that in the former case the parties to the dispute are the clans (sub-divisions of the group). But in the second case the entire ethnic group is mobilized, which means that effectively the ethnic group takes the role of the clan.

A final comparison between the above types of homicide is that there is a tendency for more relaxation of genealogical investigation of group membership with inter-ethnic cases, while more scrutinization of genealogical links accompanies intra-ethnic cases.

The standard payment of diya is made in the form of cows (one hundred of them). The payment is contributed by the kindred "ahal" of the wrong-doer — who pay about

half of it -- and other clan members who may pay about one-third of the diya. The rest is contributed by friends, community members and distant maternal relatives. However, the actual contributions made at any case of diya settlement are influenced/modified by factors such as whether the homicide is an inter-ethnic affair (in which case ethnic group members who are non-clan members will also contribute). Other factors include the wealth of the killer and his kindred, the number of clan membership, and whether other people live with them in the same territory (i.e ethnically heterogeneous community).

Ideally, therefore, diya contributions are one way of expressing solidarity. Although many contributions are made by people of different group orders, a basic distinction remains in the minds of the people between those who contribute by virtue of their group membership (in which case they are meeting an obligation) and others who want to show sympathy and good community spirit. The first category includes only clan members and/or group members.

The following account of events leading to diya settlement was given to me by a Seinga woman from Dor. Although she was only a girl when the events took place, she had a vivid memory of the story and seemed to be well informed.

According to her, the events of the story took place in the second decade of this century, or as she put it, "during the reign of Ali Dinar" (1898-1916). In those

days men used to make expeditions for stealing livestock and young people. The latter were sold as slaves.

The informant said that a classificatory brother of hers was involved in such activities. He went to Dar Masālit together with a Zaghawa man from the village of Gurmu in Dar Artag. The two men were also distant maternal relatives. They managed to capture a young girl (Fatima) and brought her back to northern Darfur. Later they sold her for three cows and a donkey. They took the animals to Gurmu where they divided the wealth between them by drawing lots. The Seinga man got the donkey and a cow while the Zaghawa man took two cows.

When the Seinga man went back to his village, his sister was angry and said to him: "You sold Fatima and you come back with a one-eyed donkey?!" The man replied: "By Allah, if I go back, I will bring cows or I will kill somebody."

The man took his dogola (heavy stick) and spears and went back to meet his friend at his house in Gurmu. He told him that he did not like the donkey. His friend replied that it was his luck which brought him the donkey and that he had to accept this fact. The man replied that he was not satisfied. His friend's answer was: "If you are not satisfied, do what you want to do."

The man went to look for the cows in the grazing land outside the village. He eventually found them and began to drive them to his village.

Back at the village, his friend told his family that he would kill his partner and take the cows to Dar Masālit. He jumped on his horse and his dog accompanied him. He began looking for the man until he found his tracks and began purusing him.

He finally caught up with him on a small qoz and managed to recapture the cows. He drove them towards the direction of the village and was followed by his partner, who was running on foot. One of the hooves of the horse uncovered a stone lying on the sand. The Seinga man took the stone in his hands and called on his partner to stop and fight. The man stopped his horse and turned back; the other quickly threw the stone at him, hitting him on the head.

When the man fell from his horse, his partner continued to beat him until he was completely dead. He then rode on the horse and galloped it on the qoz until it was tired. After that he took the body of the dead man and placed it under a tree where he also tied the horse. The idea was that the presence of the horse scared the eagles and other wild animals that might eat the corpse.

The Seinga man returned with the cows but he went directly to Hillat Qoz, to the house of his mother's brother -- Faki Hasab Allah -- who was a Tunjur notable.[1] He then told his uncle the story and asked him to tell his relatives to keep away from the village and to hide their animals in order to avoid a possible Zaghawa retaliation.

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1. The grandfather of Faki Mohammad, see Chapter V.

The people of Korabery village left it and took refuge with relatives and friends in other villages. As for the man, they took him to a hide-out in a village near the Furnung borders.

Only three people were left in the village: two Jallaba elders and a Seinga elder whose mother was a Zaghawa from Dar Artag. They left these people because the Zaghawa could not have avenged the death of their man by killing these three elders. This was due to the fact that two of them were not relatives of the murderer and the third one had blood relationship with the Zaghawa.

Back at the village of Gurmu, the people were worried about the fate of their man. His dog became thirsty and returned to the village after three days. The people then started to search for him. They followed the traces of his horse until they saw it standing under a tree. They knew something was wrong with him. When they got nearer, they saw his swollen body lying in the shade.

The Zaghawa immediately organized a raid on the village of Korabery. They surrounded the village and opened the stacks of dukhn for their horses to eat.

The chief of Sueini at the time, Malik Tahir[1], came to the Zaghawa. They demanded that he hand them the murderer. The chief told them he had not got the murderer. Instead he ordered his men to tie up the father's brother of the wanted man and leave him outside

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1. The father of the present chief.

under the burning sun. He told the Zaghawa that the arrested man was the father of their wanted murderer. He also presented the Zaghawa with a horse and ten cows as a gift. But when the Zaghawa went away for the night, they untied the man. When the Zaghawa came back they arrested him again. This idea was adopted by the chief in order to defuse Zaghawa anger and make them accept a diya settlement.

Upon the insistence of the chief that the killer was nowhere to be found, the Zaghawa accepted the negotiation of a diya settlement. One hundred cows had to be paid to the dead man's family. Half of it was contributed by the killer's kindred because they were rich enough. Other Seinga families contributed one cow each and a small proportion was collected from non-Seinga members of the community. These contributed a cow for each clan.

It is worthy noting that Seinga members who were not members of the community, i.e. who lived outside "Dor", did participate with the rest of the group. As for non-Seinga, only families who lived in the same community made contributions towards the diya.

Ending the story, the informant said that the killer remained in his hide-out until the diya was paid to the Zaghawa, who never managed to find the place. After the case was settled he went to dar al-Sabah (central Sudan) where he worked as a wage labourer for many years. He eventually returned home after ten years and nobody tried to cause him harm.

The above story illustrates how the question of ethnic identity is important in situations of conflict. In the first place, the two men were matrilineally related. They had a partnership which went well according to their plans. But when one man was discontented the disagreement could not be solved and the conflict developed into a fight ending with manslaughter. For the relatives of both sides the conflict became essentially that of "us" against "them" and that meant ethnic identification. For, as we know, had the conflict been between members of the same group the confrontation would have been limited to few families and the possibility of the escalation of fighting would have been remote. Equally, the pattern of contribution to diya payment would have been different, for it would have involved only members of the clan and not the entire ethnic group.

Lastly, it is also noteworthy that the main criterion for the definition of ethnic groups in this context of diya payment was that of genealogy. This is clearly supported by the fact that Seinga families living outside the local community did pay their contribution. As I have shown in an earlier diagram (Fig. 5, p. 270), diya is a common example where ethnic identification is based on patrilineal genealogy. The above example illustrates just that.

2. Diya between the Seinga and the Zaghawa

The following story represents a diya case in which two levels of ethnicity are involved. The events took place during the Condominium Rule in Sudan. It has been reported by the same informant who reported the previous case.

A certain Seinga man from Korabery married a Zaghawa girl from the village of Korbiya (on the Sueini-Tuar border west of Dor). Before the marriage was consummated (i.e. before wedding) a certain Zaghawa man belonging to Awlad Dawré clan eloped with the girl. He was temporarily residing in Korbiya but he took the girl to Um-Buru where they got married.

When the original husband heard the news, he told the Sueini chief who accompanied the man and his relatives to Korbiya. At that time the Sueini-Tuar border ran through the village, dividing it into two sections, each of which belonged to a different dar. The man who started the trouble was residing in the section of the village which belonged to Dar Tuar. For this reason, the Tuar chief was alerted and went to the village.

The Sueini chief and his followers camped outside the village. Likewise, the Tuar chief also arrived with his followers and camped outside the village.[1] A delegation

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1. It is customary for chiefs in Darfur to camp outside the villages that they visit, especially when they are accompanied by followers.

was then sent by the Sueini chief to the Tuar chief in order to negotiate the return of the eloped wife. The chief told the delegation to wait until he investigated the matter. They had a long argument between them.

While the Sueini delegation was away, about six men (all relatives of the husband in question) went into the village to look for the rival man. A sympathetic villager (probably an enemy of the man) showed them the house in which their wantāi[1] was hiding. The six men surrounded the house and shouted to the people inside that they wanted their wantāi. The men who were inside the house tried to leave but the Seinga prevented them from doing so by holding out their sticks. When other people in the village realized what was going on, they threw sticks over the walls for the besieged men. As a result, some of them, including the wanted man, managed to escape.

The situation developed into a fight when more people from the village joined in and more men from the Sueini camp arrived at the scene. A maternal uncle of the Seinga husband started to distribute spears among his companions. A Zaghawa man attempted to stop him by hitting him on his back. He turned back at the man and gave him a full blow on the head with a round-headed stick. The man fell unconscious to the ground and died soon afterwards.[2]

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1. A local word meaning a rival over a woman.
2. The man was not a resident of the village. He was visiting his relatives there. He belonged to the Awlad Nogi clan.

The atmosphere became tense as the news spread among the Zaghawa. The Seinga became on the defensive and withdrew from the village. As for the killer, they placed him inside the tent of the Sueini chief.

The Zaghawa became furious. They went to the Sueini camp and surrounded the chief's tent and some started to poke it with their spears, demanding that the killer should be handed to them. The followers of the Sueini chief, on the other hand, took their swords and spears and became ready for a fierce fight.

At this stage, some wise men from the two camps realized the possible consequences of such a confrontation and immediately started to defuse the situation. After hours of negotiations in which the two chiefs took part, they managed to convince the men from both sides to stay away from each other. Soon the sun went down and each group retreated to its camp.

The negotiations resulted in an agreement to take the suspected people to the court in Kutum. Accordingly, the Sueini chief appointed some men to take the killer and his sister's son (the original husband of the woman in question) to Kutum prison to await trial there. They were hand-cuffed and smuggled out of the camp in the darkness. In the morning of the next day the other four men who took part in the attack were also sent to the prison in Kutum.

The Tuar chief, on his part, also sent the man who started the trouble to the prison.

The two chiefs and their followers then withdrew to their capitals and the case was transferred to the court of law in Kutum. However, none of the arrested Seinga men pleaded guilty to manslaughter and the other side failed to provide a witness to the killing. After a year the other men were released and the killer and his uncle remained in custody. When they spent another year in the prison and neither of them confessed, a diya settlement was accepted by both parties.

The payment of the diya was organized by a council of Seinga elders. The extended families of the two prisoners jointly contributed fifty cows towards the diya settlement. But much of it was paid by the family of the husband/prisoner. Other Seinga families contributed a cow each. Non-Seinga friends and neighbours also contributed to the diya. According to the informant, they even had an excess number of cows in the end.

The two prisoners were finally released after spending a total of five years in detention. The woman was compelled to go and live with her original husband. As for the man who eloped with her, he died a year after the incident.

The ethnic problem in the above diya case has been complicated by several factors. The first important factor is the involvement of the chiefs of the two dars in the case from the beginning, which caused the tension to evolve along territorial lines. The previous political relations between the two chiefs constituted the background to their attitudes. For, as mentioned elsewhere in

the thesis (Chapter V), Dar Tuar used to be a part of Sueini territory. At the time of the incident the two chiefs had a dispute over the borders in that area. For this reason, each of them wanted to show his power by attempting to settle disputes in the village and therefore assume authority over the territory. But because both of them appeared at the scene of this particular dispute, that prospect diminished. Consequently each chief became obliged to show solidarity with his people. This is why the confrontation between the two groups was expressed in ethnic terms and in this case territory became the relevant criterion of identification.

The second factor is that the killer was not the husband of the woman who eloped with the Zaghawa man. Moreover, he was not a Seinga by birth. His father was a Masālit and he was related to the Seinga on his mother's side. But the Seinga backed him completely -- first by refusing to identify him as the killer and secondly by paying the diya. In fact, as the informant told me, his immediate paternal relatives paid only three cows because they were poor. Another relevant factor here is that the Masālit, who are very few in number, do not represent a separate ethnic group in "Dor". The reason being that some of them are ex-slaves while others arrived as strangers and were able to establish friendships with the indigenous people and settled with them. Today, all of them are allied to other groups with whom they identify. The procedure adopted in the payment of diya in the above

example shows that the Masālit man (killer) has been fully accepted as a member of the Seinga group.

Finally, it is important to note that the criterion of ethnic identification had changed when the settlement of diya was made. The genealogical criterion was adopted instead of the territorial one and so the Seinga became the other party to the dispute against the Zaghawa. This is why they made the largest contribution to the diya payment. Other members of the local community contributed a small proportion because they were acting in the minor capacities of friends and neighbours.

3. The Mediator in Disa Market

The case I am going to report deals with the role of entrepreneurs or mediators who operate across ethnic boundaries. They are to be found in the weekly markets where they facilitate economic transactions between the sellers and buyers of livestock. There are two types of mediators that operate in these markets.

The first type is called dāmin (Arabic, guarantor). This is a person who performs the role of an "insurance broker". His function is to act as a guarantor for the seller of the animal. Any person who sells an animal in a market is required by law to provide a guarantor who will witness that the information given by the seller is true. For this reason, there are guarantors in each market who witness for persons from certain ethnic groups or a number of them. Their appointment is made with the

consent of the chiefs of the dars concerned. They receive a stipulated amount of money for each certificate of registration they sign.

The certificate itself is written by a "market clerk" who is also appointed by local government authorities. His job is to register the description of the animal involved (type, sex, colour and clan brand), the amount for which it was sold, together with the full names and addresses of the seller and buyer. In addition to this he will register the names of the respective ethnic groups and clans to which the transacting individual belong. The guarantor will then sign to guarantee the deal from the seller's side.

The logic behind this system is to reduce the selling and buying of stolen animals. For this reason, the guarantor will have to replace or pay the price of the animal should it turn out to be stolen and in case they could not find the thief.

The other type of mediators do not have a legal status but they operate with the consent of the parties to the transaction to help them fix a price for the commodity. The mediator in this case will act as a translator and manager of information both of which are important for the conclusion of a deal. His role is made viable in Disa market by the fact that there is a kind of "ethnic division of labour" in operation. This can be outlined in three general statements about the supply and demand of livestock market in Disa as follows:

-- Most suppliers of camels and sheep are Zaghawa.

-- Most buyers of camels are Tunjur, Kaitinga, Fur and Berti.

-- Most buyers of sheep are Zaiyadiya.

In one of my visits to Disa market I witnessed the activities of one mediator. He was a Bideyat man who lived near Disa. He was well informed about the state of livestock markets in large centres like Millet, Kutum, El Fasher, and Omdurman. Besides commanding both Bideyat and Wagi (Zaghawa) dialects, he had a good knowledge of Arabic and Fur languages.

The general approach he adopts when mediating between persons from different ethnic groups is to speak in Arabic first. If one of them could not understand Arabic well he will speak to him in his own language. In such a case a translation is necessary in order to make both parties understand each other's position. This is very important because goods have no fixed prices and any transaction has to be settled through bargaining.

While I was observing the activities in the livestock section of Disa market, the above-mentioned mediator was helping a Zaghawi seller and a Tunjur buyer to conclude a deal involving a camel. He first started to praise the camel in Arabic while examining its body. Then he spoke to the Zaghawa man in their language and knew from him the price he was looking for. He then told the Tunjur man the owner's proposed price (in Arabic). The man was not happy with the figure and suggested instead a figure which was

ten pounds less than the owner's quotation. The mediator then discussed it again with the seller, using Zaghawa language. The owner accepted to "knock-off" five pounds from the first price. This time he spoke directly to the Tunjur man (in broken Arabic).

The buyer was still hesitant and the mediator suggested to him to seek the opinion of his fellow-villagers who were attending the market. While the man was away, the mediator had a discussion with the camel owner, using Zaghawa language. The Tunjur man, on the other hand, spent about twenty minutes consulting with his friends. When he returned, he suggested that another three pounds should be "knocked-off". The camel owner agreed, then said he could reduce two pounds and the other man accepted. The mediator was then paid a small sum of money by the camel owner and they all went to conclude the deal in front of the "market clerk" who issued them a certificate of registration. He also acted on behalf of the guarantor and signed the certificate. The money was exchanged through the clerk who also collected registration fees from both of them.

The above examples show the importance of ethnic identification in the market place. In order to conclude a serious economic deal a person must reveal his identity. Again, more than one criteria of identification could be used for the different stages of interaction in the market situation. Usually, two criteria are most applicable in this case: the territorial and the linguistic criteria.

It is clear from the example of the Bideyat mediator that the criterion of identification used at the bargaining stage is that of language. It does not matter in this situation whether a person's genealogy does not coincide with his linguistic classification because the latter is more crucial. For this matter a person's genealogy is irrelevant for the performance of economic transactions in the market place.

When it comes to the question of registration and the function of the guarantor, territory is adopted as the criterion of ethnic identification. For this purpose, a person who comes from an all-Zaghawa territory is identified as Zaghawa. This is understandable since he/she will use the names of the village head (shaikh) and the chief as references. However, persons from the transitional belt are likely to use genealogy as the criterion for ethnic identification in a similar market situation because they come from ethnically heterogeneous communities. But if the transaction takes place outside the area, it is more likely that the criterion of territory would also be employed by the actors.

4. The Awlad Tāko of Tekerabé

As mentioned elsewhere in the thesis (Chapters V and VIII) the Tekera people of Tekerabé belong to the Awlad Tāko group, some of whom live in "Dor" and the Nawra area in southwestern Sueini. But those who live in Tekerabé (northwest of Dor) are fully incorporated into

the Zaghawa society and are usually identified with them. However, they still remember their origin and can declare it under certain circumstances. The following story shows the importance of social context in determining the way people identify with ethnic groups. The story reflects on a personal experience I had with a previous school colleague.

In the 1960's there was only one intermediate school in the whole of what was then called Northern Darfur District. The district included Dar Zaghawa, Mellit, Kebekabiya and Kutum. Consequently the population of the school was ethnically highly diverse (Chapter II). The relationships between the pupils was greatly influenced by their ethnic backgrounds. For example, all the cliques in the school were ethnically based.

It was a boarding-school and the pupils slept in large rooms that accommodated more than ten persons. It so happened that I lived in the same room as a Zaghawa pupil named Abbaker. I knew from him that he was a Zaghawa and everybody in the school treated him as such. He always associated with other Zaghawa pupils with whom he used to communicate in the Zaghawa language. Moreover, he used to speak Arabic in a Zaghawa accent. But at that time I did not have any idea about the territorial divisions of Dar Zaghawa, so I did not bother to ask him about his village.

Several years later, after I last saw him, I met Abbaker while I was conducting research in Dor. He is

now a school teacher and he was on holiday when I met him. He came to visit relatives and friends in Dor.

This time I asked him about his village and the clan to which he belonged. I was surprised to learn from him that he was not a Zaghawa but that he belonged to the Awlad Tāko. He explained to me that the Zaghawa know them by the name "Tekera" and that the name of their village Tekerabé means the "village of Tekera" (in Zaghawa). Abbaker told me that the people of his village have been transformed into Zaghawa and that they were completely accepted in Zaghawa society.

My informant then contrasted the "Tekera" with the Awlad Tāko of southern Sueini and noted that the first section adheres to Zaghawa traditions and way of life and the second one merged with the Fur and adopted their way of life.

Another significant piece of information I learned from him is that he was able to trace his genealogical link with an Awlad Tāko family that lives in southern Sueini (with the Fur). Their common ancestor is only four generations away. Surprisingly I discovered that I knew a relative of his from southern Sueini whom I had also met at the intermediate school in Kutum. He was considered a Fur in the school because he associated with Fur pupils and spoke the Fur language fluently. I never knew the two of them were related until my informant told me.

The above story demonstrates very clearly that ethnic identification does change according to situations. In

the school situation, the criteria of identification that the pupils employ to define themselves and others were mainly the linguistic and the territorial ones. However, when I asked my informant at a different time and place (Dor) he used the genealogical criterion and identified himself as Awlad Tāko.

5. The Awlad Hilal Clan

This is a story of a transformed Berti clan. I shall here report how two of its members identified differently when I asked them separately about their ethnic group.

When I first arrived at Dor, I was told by several informants of a Berti clan, named Awlad Hilal, whose members had adopted the Zaghawa way of life. They used to live in the qoz area northeast of Dor and were mainly centred in the two villages of Gumé.

According to my informants these people became pastoral transhumants. They speak Zaghawa as their first language and conduct their marriages according to Zaghawa standards. They had little contact with the Berti of Turé and Solé who live only about ten miles to the south of Gumé. As a matter of fact I could record only one case of intermarriage between a Berti man from Turé and a woman from Gumé.

One day I met a man named Ahmed who came to the court in Dor because he had a dispute with his mother-in-law. He travelled to Dor, a village to the south of El Fasher called Shangil Tobāi. I understood from him that his

people had moved from Gumé in the early 1970's and resettled there because of the drought. When I asked him about the ethnic group to which he belonged, he replied: "Zaghawi Hilali". He then drew their animal brand like this  . Replying to my question about their genealogy, Ahmed claimed that the Awlad Hilal descended from Ahmed Al-Magur and were therefore related to the Tunjur. He refused to confess any relationship with the Berti.

Several months later I visited the small village of Turé -- on the Sueini-Tuar border (west of Sayé) -- because people told me that it was inhabited by Zaghawa Awlad Hilal. I went to see the village head, Doda Khatir, who told me that the village was started by his father about 38 years ago. His father was born in Gumé before he left and went to live with friends in Korbiya. As a result of a disagreement with the authorities there, he moved again and set up his own village at the present site.

Asking him about the ethnic composition of the village, Shaikh Doda told me that there were thirteen married men in the village, six of whom were members of his own extended family. The rest, he said, were "gabāyl" (meaning strangers from other ethnic groups) and that they belonged to various Zaghawa clans.

I then asked Shaikh Doda about his own ethnic group and he replied "Bertawi Hilali" (i.e. Berti Awlad Hilal). He drew the animal brand of his clan as  . When I showed him the brand drawn by my first informant -- Ahmed --

he agreed that it was also the brand of his clan but that additional markings were used to differentiate between various sections of the clan. It is worthy noting here that the mark  is also the brand used by the Zaghawa clans of Kadaw, Nogoi, Lilla, Ushté, Eni and Asira. However, I could not extract a coherent account from Shaikh Doda or other informants as to what made all these clans use the same animal brand.

When I commented that he looked like a Zaghawa, Shaikh Doda explained that it was because he lived for a long time with the Zaghawa and he adopted their way of life. He told me that all the children in his family learn Zaghawa first and learn Arabic after they grow up. I also learned from him that the "stranger" families in his village are all related to him through marriage.

There can be no doubt that the two informants belong to the same clan (Awlad Hilal). If their ethnic identifications seem incoherent, it is because ethnicity is situationally manipulated by the actors who clearly have different interests. Judging by our understanding of the general circumstances, it is understandable that a person who lives outside Dar Zaghawa (Ahmed), should be anxious to assert his Zaghawa identity and for this reason the criteria of territory and language are more relevant. On the other hand, our second informant (Doda) still lives in Zaghawa territory and therefore preferred to assert his identity in terms of the genealogical criterion.

6. A Dispute over Agricultural Land in Sayé

Disputes over land in Darfur usually turn into conflict situations that invoke mobilization of support along ethnic lines. But whether a particular case will develop into a large-scale ethnic confrontation depends largely on the circumstances surrounding the dispute. These disputes usually dominate the courts in the short period after the first rains and the beginning of the weeding time. Before I present one of these cases, I shall show the general social background to these disputes.

As I have shown in the thesis (Chapter VI), there is no private ownership of land by individuals as such. In "Dor", land ownership is effectively assumed by those who cultivate it so long as it is kept under use. Although land is not sold, it can be given as a gift to somebody. The most common example of land donations is that from a man to his son-in-law. Actually, this is often used as a tactic for persuading the couple to stay with the wife's family (matrilocal residence), but if the young couple move away after a few years the land will go back to its original owner/user.

It is interesting to note that such donations cannot be given away by the receiver to a third person without the consent of the original donor. This confirms the point that gifts of land are used as means of furthering social relationships. For this reason, one can reasonably argue that most pieces of land generally change hands frequently.

Because land is used as a means of cementing social relationships, one can also argue that disputes over land equally reflect the deterioration of these relationships. This is true because people who are on good terms with each other, usually settle their differences outside the court (with the help of mediators and arbitrators). In this respect, cases that appear before the court can be said to have reached an acute stage.

Usually, such disputes are limited to the persons involved in the dispute and the members of their respective immediate families, but if a dispute should involve people from different ethnic groups, feelings of enmity do often follow such a cleavage. The specific manifestation of ethnicity may eventually be reflected in the way the support of other people is enlisted. That depends on the special proceedings of the case itself.

The following account concerns a dispute over a piece of land that is used for growing vegetables during the rainy season (coll. bolāi). The persons involved in this dispute belong to different ethnic groups but they are related through marriage (affines). They all come from the village of Garfuda in the Sayé area. The dispute was first brought to the court when a Tunjur man from Sayé sued a woman and her daughter for disrooting the offshoots of dukhn in his farm. That was a week after the first rains in the summer of 1977. The court considered it a criminal offence and the two women were convicted on the basis of their statements and were fined.

A week later, while I was attending the court, a young Zaghawa man from Sayé came to complain against the same Tunjur man, claiming that he had planted his bolāi with dukhn. When the man was brought to the court (in its next session[1]), his answer to the allegation was that the bolāi in question was originally a part of his farm.

The defendant said that the farm itself was given to him by his mother-in-law in 1959. He then explained how he gave away a part of the farm as a bolāi to the claimant's mother in 1962. The latter, the court was told, is the defendant's sister-in-law. The Tunjur man then claimed that the woman started to move the boundaries of her plot each year until she finally occupied a large part of his farm.

By this time it became clear to the court that the young man was litigating on behalf of his mother. As a matter of course, the "native courts" in Darfur accept such representation and no formal authorization is needed. But when the claimant was asked whether he had witnesses to support his claim, he could not name any. His excuse was that he did not participate in the cultivation of the bolāi because he had been away from the village, first in the maseek (Quranic school), then he went to Khartoum as a migrant labourer. He therefore asked the court to allow him to get the names of the witnesses from his mother.

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1. The court meets twice a wekk, on Saturday and Tuesday.

The court agreed and gave him a summoning form with blank spaces for the names of witnesses which were to be filled in by a court member from Sayé after the informant has consulted with his mother. The court also commissioned two of its members to take the testimonies of the witnesses on the site of the land which was the subject of the dispute. Again, this is a common practice for "native courts" in Darfur. This is because boundaries cannot be precisely described since land is not registered.

By mere chance, the court members commissioned to investigate the case happened to be both Zaghawa. One of them came from Um-Shidik and the other from Sayé. The latter actually came from the same village as the claimant and the defendant. The two of them were requested to report their findings to the court in its next session.

When the court was adjourned for lunch that day, a strange thing happened. The defendant invited the court member from Sayé to the place where he left his luggage (under a tree). From the way they talked I gathered that they had arrived together from Sayé that morning. Upon reaching their destination, the defendant presented the court member with marisa (local beer). The defendant then went back to the court building (apparently sent by his companion) and the other court member who was to co-investiage the case. They left together and joined the third man, who was helping himself to the marisa.

A week later the commission reported to the court. The claimant and the defendant were brought and the court

members evaluated the testimonies of the witnesses. According to the findings of the team, the bolāi in question was given to the woman by the defendant. She did not increase her lot but kept to the original boundary. Because the woman did not give up cultivating her plot the man had no right to claim it back from her. Moreover, it was also argued by some court members that the man did not give the land on certain conditions (i.e. he had not stated whether it was for a limited period) and that greatly reduced his chances of reclaiming the land. The court then arrived at its decision and the claimant won the case.

The defendant was disappointed and declared that he was going to appeal to a higher court in Kutum. He also openly accused the court commission of taking sides with the claimant because they belonged to the same ethnic group. Later he told me that some of the witnesses were also Zaghawa and that was why he lost the case. I also understood that he was on bad terms with his in-laws although his wife was on his side.

The above story illustrates how ordinary disputes can be explained in ethnic terms by the actors when their interests are threatened. The defendant might not have won the case anyway even if all the court members were Tunjur, but the fact that he expressed his resentment in ethnic terms merely reflects the bitterness of his experience. One may also say that the dispute did not develop into a confrontation between two ethnic groups

because it was handled by the court from the beginning. The possibility of a quarrel (which usually escalates disputes) was reduced by the fact that the persons involved were related through marriage. Generally speaking, people may contest with their in-laws in the court, but serious fights that lead to injuries are rare indeed.

Finally one may add that the criterion for ethnic identification used in this situation is that of genealogy. Sayé is a multi-ethnic community and many people there are multi-linguals, so genealogy is the obvious criterion which is available in the case reported here. This is because co-villagers cannot establish their ethnicity on the basis of the criteria of territory, occupation or language, since these are unlikely to differentiate between them.

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